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HELEN  
IN  
SWITZERLAND  
A TALE  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



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THE CHAMOIS HUNTER.—PAGE 136.

# HELEN IN SWITZERLAND:

A TALE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY

THE HON. AUGUSTA BETHELL,

AUTHOR OF 'ECHOES OF AN OLD BELL,' 'MAUD LATIMER,' ETC.

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. WHYMPER.*



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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. AN UNLUCKY FALL, . . . . .	I
II. WALKS AND TALKS, . . . . .	17
III. OLD STORIES AND NEW SIGHTS, . . . . .	37
IV. THE SPOILT CHILD, . . . . .	54
V. THE TORN SKETCH, . . . . .	65
VI. SELF-DENIAL, . . . . .	78
VII. THE LAST EXCURSION, . . . . .	84
VIII. SANTA CLAUS, . . . . .	91
IX. BERNE AND ITS BEARS, . . . . .	100
X. THE LAKE OF GENEVA, . . . . .	109
XI. NEW ACQUAINTANCES, . . . . .	126
XII. A DISCOVERY, . . . . .	147
XIII. JANE'S CONFESSION, . . . . .	170
XIV. THE JOURNEY TO THUN, . . . . .	185
XV. OLD FRIENDS AGAIN, . . . . .	200
XVI. LAST DAYS, . . . . .	216



## HELEN IN SWITZERLAND.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### AN UNLUCKY FALL.

**A**ND so, dear Helen,' said Mr. Lancaster, 'I fear you must make up your mind to remaining here for at least a week or more, as Mr. Clarke says my ankle will not be well before then.'

'How tiresome for you, papa! I am so sorry,' replied Helen, a fair-haired girl some thirteen or fourteen years of age. 'I hope you are not in much pain now. Oh dear! those horrible stone steps.'

'I am very much annoyed at the delay on your account,' said her father, 'as I'm afraid you will find it so dull here with no one to take you out.'

'Oh, never mind that,' said Helen, 'I shall

manage very well; and now, papa, I shall leave you quiet, for Mr. Clarke said you should try to sleep this morning, as you had had such a bad night;—and, having darkened the room, and made her father comfortable, Helen stole away into the adjoining saloon, which, with its carpetless polished oak floor and scanty furniture, had a most uncomfortable, forlorn appearance.

We are making her acquaintance in a hotel at Basle, that beautifully situated old town on the banks of the Rhine; and while, for want of better employment, she is gazing out of one of the large windows on the broad flood of clear light green water, mentally contrasting it with the turbulent dirty black river which runs close to her home in Scotland, we will find out something about her previous history.

Helen Lancaster is an only child; her mother died a few days after her birth, leaving her to the care of a devoted father, who was ‘baith faither and mither’ to the little motherless one. After his wife’s death, Mr. Lancaster retired to a place of his own in the Highlands, and there Helen’s childhood was passed. It was a quiet home, but still a very happy one—her father, her

old governess, the clergyman of the parish, and a few villagers, formed her little world. She had cousins living in Edinburgh, and now and then one or two of them came up to Ardloss to pay her a visit; twice she had been to stay with them, and one summer she had spent a month in England with an aunt and some other cousins; but the greater part of her life had been passed away from other children, and, from being so much with grown-up people, she was graver and more thoughtful than girls of her age usually are, and, at the same time, more childish in many ways. Six months before this story opens, Helen caught the measles, and suffered so much that for several weeks after her recovery she remained pale, languid, and unequal to any exertion.

Mr. Lancaster, becoming alarmed, took her to see the best physician in Edinburgh. Change of scene, as much fresh air as possible, and complete rest from any study, were prescribed, and so it happened that before very long Mr. Lancaster and Helen found themselves *en route* for Switzerland. They started about the last week in May, and travelling slowly (for it was all new ground to Helen) by way of Belgium and the Rhine,



arrived at Basle early in the second week in June. Helen was delighted with everything she saw, and her health and spirits had already made rapid progress towards recovery. It was a beautiful afternoon when they reached Basle, and her delight at having actually entered Switzerland was unbounded. Rooms being procured, and dinner ordered, she insisted on accompanying her father on a walk through the town, declaring she was not at all tired.

So off they set for the terrace, planted with chestnut trees, which, standing high above the river, commands a beautiful view of the Rhine and Black Mountains. After spending some time there, they turned their faces towards the Minster, which is just behind; descending some old well-worn stone steps, Mr. Lancaster stumbled and fell, spraining his ankle severely. There was no one near at the time, but Helen ran into the town for assistance, obtaining it by dint of broken French and German, and her father was carried back to the hotel, and an English doctor sent for. Mr. Lancaster was a stout, heavy man, and the fall had shaken him very much, besides having injured his ankle.

Helen was very anxious about him, until the doctor assured her that he had not hurt himself seriously, and that in a little time all would be well. After this, she went to bed with a lighter heart, but the fright had made her restless and nervous, and she was continually waking up with a start, fancying her father was calling her. Getting gently out of bed, she had several times in the night crept into his room, which opened into hers, to listen if he was awake and in want of anything. All this made her feel very tired the next morning, and not fit for much more exertion than watching the river required.

Indeed, there was little else for her to do, for intending only to stay two nights at Basle and to proceed to Lucerne by carriage, Mr. Lancaster had at once sent on the chief part of the luggage by diligence (at that time there were no railways in Switzerland); but now that their stay would be prolonged for several days, this arrangement was very inconvenient. Helen was therefore without books or work, and being naturally of an energetic nature, she found the time hang very heavy on her hands as the day wore on. She was not sorry when her one o'clock

dinner made its appearance, as it gave her occupation for a little while, and afterwards discovering that Murray's *Handbook for Switzerland* had been left out, she took refuge in its pages; till, after reading for some time, she at length fell fast asleep. She was awakened by the entrance of her little maid Marjorie, who came to tell her that 'the Maister was awake noo,' and would like to see her; and the rest of the day was spent in her father's room.

On the morrow, Mr. Lancaster, although better, was still suffering great pain, and his head was very uncomfortable from the fall, so that poor Helen passed another dull day, as she could not go out by herself; and, although her father told her to take Marjorie, she did not like to do so, as he would have been left quite alone.

Matters, however, brightened the next day; Mr. Rivers, the English chaplain, having heard of the accident, called upon Mr. Lancaster, and discovering from Helen that she had not been out once since, he asked to be allowed to take her home with him, saying, that his little girls would be delighted to welcome her, and that, although much younger, they would still be

better than no companions at all. Her father was only too glad for her to go, for he had noticed her pale cheeks and want of spirits, and knew how necessary fresh air was for her; and Helen, thoroughly tired of the dull hotel and of Murray's *Handbook*, was delighted at the idea.

The clergyman's house was a little way out of the town. He told Helen that he had lived abroad for ten years, and that his little daughters, Florence and Lilian, had been born in Germany.

'They speak German better than English,' he said. 'You will be astonished to hear two such little mites jabbering away as fast as possible. We have no English servants, and have positively to forbid a single German word being spoken in the drawing-room, otherwise the children would never learn their mother-tongue.'

Helen was very much amused when she saw the two little girls. They certainly looked more foreign than English with their short straight hair, and little German dresses. Mrs. Rivers took them up to Helen, and told them she had come to spend the day with them, and that they must do all they could to amuse her.

'Yes, yes, *Mütterchen*; we'll be very good to her.'

Mrs. Rivers held up her finger at the German word.

'Oh!' cried Florence, 'I know what you mean, I ought to have said mamma. Oh!' making a little face, 'what an ugly word! *Mütterchen*' (little mother) 'is so much nicer.'

'Perhaps so, little woman!' said her father; 'but remember that this is the drawing-room, where you must speak English.'

'Oh, nasty English,' said Lilian, who was just a year younger than her sister.

'Oh no,' said Helen, 'don't say that. I'm sure it's much prettier than German.'

'I'm afraid Florence and Lily won't agree with you,' said Mrs. Rivers; 'but I hope they will alter their opinion when they have once set foot on their native shores.'

But Florence and Lily were quite sure they should never change their minds, and informed their mamma very gravely that they never never wanted to leave Switzerland. Gretchen—that was their nurse—often told them that there was no sun and no mountains in England: it either rained all day long, or else people had to find their way about with lamps because of the fogs.

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Helen, although Scotch, could not quietly hear her sister kingdom thus maligned, but stood up bravely for it, telling the little girls that Gridiron (so she pronounced *Gretchen*, much to their amusement), never having been there, could know nothing about it. 'I have been there,' she continued, 'and it didn't rain once the whole time; and the sun was much hotter than here.'

The children had quite an animated discussion on the subject, much to Mrs. Rivers' amusement; but German words at last grew so numerous that she was obliged to call Florence and Lily to order for transgressing rules; and dinner being ready, the subject was dropped.

Mr. Rivers had an unmarried sister living with him, who took a great fancy to Helen. She was pleased with her manners and intelligent way of speaking of all she had seen in her travels; and, after dinner was over, proposed taking her to see the cathedral, which, owing to Mr. Lancaster's unfortunate accident, she had not yet visited.

Helen was very pleased to go with her new friend, and, on the way, she asked if there were any legends connected with the building, or any

particular history attached to it. 'Papa always tells me anything he knows about the places we go to, and I like to hear it so much. He told me such pretty stories about the Rhine, and a great many about Cologne and Heidelberg.'

'I don't know of any legends connected with the Minster,' replied Miss Rivers, 'but it is very interesting in point of architecture, and of history as well; for you know the meetings of the Council of Basle were held in the Chapter-house.'

After thoroughly examining the interior, where Miss Rivers pointed out the red marble tombstone of Erasmus, they wandered through the beautiful cloisters, and here Miss Rivers showed Helen the monuments of the three reformers, Haussheim, Grynacus, and Meyer. Now Helen had a very indistinct idea with regard to the Council of Basle. She had certainly both heard and read of it; but if asked why and when it had been held, she would not have been able to have answered the question. In the same way she had very often met with the name of Erasmus in books, and had a sort of idea that he was a very clever man, but was quite in ignorance as to

any further particulars about him. She thought she would ask her father on both subjects on her return home ; but then she remembered that it might make his head ache again to talk much, and so determined to ask Miss Rivers instead ; and, as they left the cathedral to walk on the terrace, she said, ' Will you please tell me something about the Council of Basle and Erasmus, if you don't mind ?'

' With pleasure,' replied Miss Rivers. ' We can talk about it as we go along. You have read of John Huss of Prague, Helen, I daresay, that great German reformer, one of the first who ventured to attack the abuses of the Church in Germany ?'

' Yes, I remember that the Pope and Priests were very angry with him for saying that they taught the people to believe a great deal that was untrue and deceitful.'

' Well, he gained so many Bohemians over to his way of thinking, that at last the Pope, John XXIII., sent for him to Rome, where he refused to go, saying he would appear before the Council of Constance instead, which was held on account of the division of the Papacy, there being three



Popes at the same time. The Emperor Sigmund gave Huss a safe-conduct, but he had scarcely reached Constance before he was seized by his opponents, and imprisoned in a narrow dungeon on the banks of the Rhine. Afterwards he was removed to another prison, and finally burnt at the stake.'

'Oh yes!' said Helen; 'and I remember that he said on the day of his death, "To-day you will roast a goose (the meaning of his name Huss), but a hundred years hence a swan that you cannot kill will appear." He meant Luther, didn't he?'

'Yes, and his prophecy was true enough.

'His death was far from having the effect his enemies desired, for his doctrines had taken deep root, and the Bohemians, enraged at the deceitful manner in which he had been entrapped by the Emperor, swore to avenge him. This was the beginning of the terrible Hussite War, which lasted fifteen years. Led on by Ziska, the famous one-eyed general, the Bohemians committed every kind of violence and cruelty. Their opponents were not slow in following their example, and cities were sacked and burnt,

churches and monasteries destroyed, and inhabitants murdered, until Germany was one mass of devastation. At last Pope Martin v. died, and his successors left no means untried to terminate the war. For this purpose, as well as to effect reforms in the Church, the Council of Basle was convoked in July 1431.

‘It was led by the Cardinal Julian Cesarini, to whom the difficult task of reconciling the Hussites with the Church was deputed. For some time they would listen to no arguments, only replying, “You well know what separates us from you. You preach the Gospel with your mouths, but we practise it in our actions.” It seems hard to reconcile this speech with all the dreadful barbarities they committed; but so enraged were they by the death of Huss and Jerome of Prague, that they considered their actions perfectly justifiable. Of course they were very far from being so in reality.

‘The Cardinal, anxious beyond measure to terminate the war, invited the Bohemians and Hungarians, and the chief of all who held Hussite opinions, to Basle. He treated them with the utmost respect, and was very ready to meet

them half way in religious concessions. The Council, however, met several times before anything was finally settled. At length, in 1433, the terms which the Hussites demanded with regard to their power of preaching, the manner in which the Holy Communion was to be administered, and other points, were agreed to, and in this way peace was restored, and the frightful war brought to an end.

‘I must tell you about Erasmus to-morrow, Helen, for it is now time to go home; and after tea you will be in a hurry to get back to the hotel, I suppose.’

‘Yes; I mustn’t leave papa alone too long. Oh dear! I wish he hadn’t had that tiresome fall.’

‘Yes, it was very unfortunate, but how thankful you should be that it was no worse! There is always so much to be grateful for in everything that happens!’

Helen’s conscience rather reproached her as she remembered how much she had thought of the delay and inconvenience occasioned by her father’s accident, instead of being thankful that it had not been more serious. Miss Rivers’

words had thrown a new light on the subject, and she determined that another time, before grumbling, she would look and see if there were not a bright side to the picture.

Lily came running to meet them as they entered the house.

‘Tea is quite *fertig*; no, ready, I mean; the *brod und bütter*; oh dear! bread and butter is on the table, and mamma has given us some English jam because you are here,’ she said, addressing Helen.

‘Oh! so you don’t despise English jam?’ said the latter, laughing. ‘I’m glad something pleases you that comes from England!’

‘I never thought of that before,’ laughed little Lily. ‘Well, there is *one* nice English thing then.’

On her return home, Helen found that Mr. Lancaster had had a nice long sleep, and was feeling much better. She told him what a happy day she had spent, and stayed some time with him, talking over all she had seen and heard, until she refused to say another word, for fear her father should have a bad night.

‘Mr. Clarke will scold me to-morrow for letting you talk so much, papa, so I shall say good-night, and run off to bed;’ and away she went, a different creature from the little dull Helen of the morning.





## CHAPTER II.

### WALKS AND TALKS.



EXT morning, as Helen was sitting alone, she heard a great chattering on the stairs, and in came the waiter, followed by Florence and Lily Rivers, who had come to beg her to return home with them.

‘De leetle Fräuleins hab come to see you, Mees,’ volunteered the waiter, smiling at the two little girls, who were great friends of his.

‘Mamma sends her love, and hopes you will come home with us, if your papa is better,’ said Florence.

Helen was well pleased to go, for her father was much better; and it was such a lovely day, she was longing to be out of doors. Gretchen was waiting to go home with the children, but

they took a long walk first to the top of a very steep hill, from which they had a beautiful view of the Black Mountains. It was a merry walk, for the two little girls never ceased chattering. They had a great deal to tell Helen of all they did during the year; how, in the summer, they always went for a month to some delightful place in the mountains, where they ran wild like little colts.

‘We don’t do any lessons there,’ said Lily, ‘but are out of doors all day long; and there isn’t half so much fuss made about this dreadful English!’

Helen laughed at the tone in which she drawled out the last word; and then, in her turn, told the little girls all about her own happy home in beautiful Scotland. She described the scenery in glowing terms, becoming quite animated as she told them of all her favourite haunts; the lovely little glens filled with ferns and wild-flowers, the picturesque waterfalls and deep ravines. Then she talked to them of her garden, and of the two favourite deer-hounds whom she had been so sorry to leave.

‘What are their names?’ asked Florence.

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‘Gellert and Luah. They *are* such beauties; so good and gentle! I often walk about quite alone with them, for papa says he is never afraid to trust me with such faithful guardians.’

‘I don’t like big dogs,’ said little Lily. ‘I should like to see everything else, but not them!’

‘Oh!’ said Helen, ‘you couldn’t be afraid of them. I used often to ride on Gellert when I was a little thing, and he was never rough. They looked so sorrowfully at me with their soft large eyes when I came away, that I quite cried to leave them.’

‘Cried to leave two dogs!’ exclaimed Lily. ‘Oh, how silly!’

‘Well, that’s what papa said, but I couldn’t help it. You see they were my companions and play-fellows; for I haven’t any sisters or little friends at Ardloss, and I always call Gellert and Luah my brothers.’

‘I’m glad they are not mine,’ said Lily. ‘Aren’t you very dull at home all by yourself? I’m sure I should be without Flo!’ putting her arm round her sister’s neck.

‘Yes, because you’ve always had her,’ replied Helen. ‘I’ve never had any one but papa, Miss



Selby (that's my governess), and the dogs ; and papa is everything to me.'

'Well, little girls,' said Mr. Rivers, as he met them at the door on their return, 'have you had a nice walk ?'

'Oh, so nice !' they all exclaimed.

'And, do you know, papa,' added Lily, 'we've hardly used one German word.'

Helen would not wait for tea, fearing her father might be dull in her absence. Miss Rivers offered to take her home, and, as they walked along, she said, 'I told you yesterday, Helen, that I didn't think there were any legends connected with the cathedral, but I remembered afterwards the story of the clock always striking one hour in advance of any other place, a custom, I believe, which was continued down to the beginning of the present century.'

'How curious ! Why was it ?' asked Helen.

'I believe it arose in this manner. Once a great many centuries ago, when Basle was besieged by foreign foes, some traitors in the city agreed to open the gates to them when the clock should strike the midnight hour. Their plot was, however, discovered almost at the last

moment by the watchman, who was at first in despair how to make use of his knowledge, as it was too late to warn the Bishop and the Council, twelve o'clock being ready to strike. But a clever thought struck him: he rushed to the top of the clock tower, was in time to move the hands round, and *one* stroke alone sounded from the tower, instead of twelve. The traitors, astonished, thought they must have been asleep; bewildered and discouraged, they were afraid to put their plans into execution. Next day when the Council learnt how the clock had saved the State, they determined that, to commemorate the event, it should always strike one hour in advance.

‘And now for Erasmus, about whom I have been refreshing my memory. He was born at Rotterdam in 1467. The Dutch are very proud of their illustrious countryman. Three statues were raised to him in his birthplace alone, the house in which he was born is preserved with the greatest care, and a college for Greek and Latin erected to his memory.’

‘Was his father a clever man?’

‘Yes; but Erasmus was left an orphan when

very young, and his friends, to save themselves trouble, tried to persuade him to become a monk. After some resistance on his part, he entered the Cloister of Stein.'

'And didn't he like it?'

'No; the brothers were a very bad set of men, and his only consolation was in his books. For five years he studied indefatigably, and at the end of that time left the monastery with the Bishop of Cambray, who wanted a private secretary skilful in writing Latin. His fame as a scholar was rapidly spreading, and both at Paris and in England he had many private pupils. His first visit to England was during the reign of Henry VII., and then began his life-long friendship with Sir Thomas More, famed for his domestic virtues and martyr death.'

'Who put him to death?' asked Helen.

'Henry VIII., at the time of the Reformation. More was a Roman Catholic, and refusing to renounce the faith in which he had been brought up, he was burnt at the stake. Erasmus published several works: his fame became world-wide; but his writings, although much read and admired for their talent, were considered very

dangerous, for he had imbibed the doctrines of Luther. Although he lived by turns in England, Italy, France, and Germany, he could never speak a word of the language of either country, always writing and speaking in Latin.'

'How very odd! but I suppose he knew Dutch?'

'Well, yes; unless he had forgotten it since leaving Holland. In the monastery, no doubt, Latin was always spoken.'

'Wasn't he obliged to go back to the monastery again?'

'No; he was released from his vows, and able to live where he pleased. He had become so famous that every large city was anxious to have the honour of receiving him. After living at Basle for some years, he removed to Fribourg, returning here, however, before his death. He felt More's loss acutely. Worn out with age, pain, and sickness, he survived him but a few months, and died at this place in 1535. And here we are at the "Three Kings," Helen, where I must bid you good-bye. I hope we shall see you again to-morrow, dear,' and, with a kind  
well, Miss Rivers left her at the hotel.

'Well, my darling,' said her father, as she entered his room looking very bright, 'I see you have had a pleasant day; your looks speak for you.'

'Oh yes, I have been very happy,' said Helen; 'only I wanted you all the time. I had a long merry scrambling walk with Florence and Lily, and such a nice one home with Miss Rivers.'

'Which did you enjoy the most?' asked Mr. Lancaster.

'Oh, they were so different. Flo and Lily are such fun, they make me laugh so; but then I am quite as happy with Miss Rivers, she is so kind, and answers all my questions.'

'What did you hear about to-day?' asked her father. Helen told him all she had heard of Erasmus.

'Yes, he was a remarkable man,' said Mr. Lancaster; 'far beyond the time he lived in. There is no doubt but that he was strongly in favour of the Reformation, although he and Luther did not agree on the subject. Erasmus was a man of peace and books, and tried to persuade Luther to be more gentle and submissive. The idea of a tranquil reformation, however,

made the latter smile. Did you see that picture of Erasmus by Holbein, Helen ?

‘No, papa. Are there any pictures to be seen here ? How I wish you were well enough to take me to see them !’

‘Well, I feel so much better to-day, that I hope Mr. Clarke will let me go out the day after to-morrow, and then we will find out where Holbein’s pictures are to be seen, and I will take you.’

‘Oh, papa, how nice ! but you mustn’t stand.’

‘No, I’ll contrive to find a chair, and shall do very well. I do not suppose you will care for Holbein’s drawings as much as the Italian masters, Helen ; but some of his pictures are very fine, and well worth seeing. Erasmus was almost his first patron, and induced him to visit England, giving him a letter to Sir Thomas More, who introduced him to the king.’

‘Wasn’t it Holbein who painted Anne of Cleves, flattering her so much that the king determined to marry her, upon only seeing her picture ?’ asked Helen.

‘Yes ; and Henry’s anger knew no bounds when the ugly original made her appearance.

In his early years Holbein worked as a house-painter in Basle. A story is told of him, that on one occasion when decorating the shop of an apothecary, who kept him close to his work, he painted a pair of legs, so exactly like his own, on the under side of the scaffolding, that his employer, seated below, believed him to be constantly present and hard at work, when in reality he was at a neighbouring wine shop, or elsewhere.'

Helen laughed. 'And wasn't he ever found out, papa?'

'Ah, that I can't tell you, Helen; neither can I vouch for the truth of the story.'

Much to Helen's delight, her father was able to take her to see the pictures before leaving Basle, and Miss Rivers went with them. Helen had great talent for drawing, and Mr. Lancaster intended her to have some good lessons on her return home. Up to the present time she had only learnt with Miss Selby. On leaving the gallery, Mr. Lancaster went home to rest, and Miss Rivers asked Helen to take a walk with her, which the latter gladly agreed to do.

'I hope we shall go to Dresden on our way

home,' she said as they walked along. 'Papa says the pictures are so beautiful there.'

'Yes, they are,' said Miss Rivers. 'You will see that famous one by Holbein, "The Burgo-master of Basle and his Family thanking the Madonna for restoring a Child to health." We saw the sketch for it to-day, but the painting is far more beautiful. The contrast between the pleasing but slightly heavy faces of the German family, and the pure spiritual one of the Holy Virgin, is very striking.'

After talking some time about the pictures, Miss Rivers said, 'This will be our last walk, I fear, Helen dear, as you leave on Monday.'

The morrow was Sunday, a busy day always with Miss Rivers, who superintended the singing in church, and taught a class of girls in the afternoon.

'How dreadfully I shall miss you!' cried Helen. 'I hope I shall see you again some day. Won't you ever come to England?'

A look of pain came into Miss Rivers' face at the question. She did not reply for a minute or two, and Helen, looking up, saw that her eyes were full of tears.



‘Oh! I am so sorry I—’

‘There is nothing to be sorry for, dear; you couldn’t know what painful thoughts your question would awaken. Sit down here, Helen, on this large flat stone, and I will tell you why I cannot bear the thoughts of going back to England. It is more than a year since I have spoken on the subject to any one, but it is always present in my mind; and, child as you are, I feel it would be a comfort to tell you.

‘I have only lived with my brother for the last two years; before then, my time was spent chiefly with a married cousin who had been brought up with me, and whom I loved as a sister. After my dear father’s death, now more than six years ago, she and her husband begged me to live with them, and I agreed to do so. I was very happy, they were so good and kind; and they had one little boy, four years of age, whom I loved more dearly than I can tell you.’

Here Miss Rivers’ voice failed, and for some moments she was unable to continue.

‘Poor Miss Rivers,’ said Helen, taking hold of her hand affectionately. ‘Did he die?’

‘Yes. Through my carelessness, the wrong medicine was given him by mistake.’

‘Oh, how dreadful! How did it happen?’

‘To this day it is a mystery to me, Helen, for when I placed the bottle on the table, I was perfectly certain that it was the right one. Of course it was not, as was proved afterwards. The little darling had been very ill for some time with scarlatina, which had attacked him in a bad form. From the first he was in great danger, and the doctor did not think he could recover. At last, however, the crisis seemed past, there were hopes of his recovery, but the greatest care and watching were still required, for he was dreadfully weak, and food and medicine had to be given him at certain times. My cousin, her husband, and myself had shared the nursing all through his illness, for he would let no one else come near him with the exception of his nurse, who, poor woman, was nearly distracted with face-ache and toothache for days together, and was in consequence, although most anxious to do all she could for her charge, of little use. The day on which we first heard there was hope for him she seemed better, and entreated us to let her

sit up alone with the child, that we might have some rest. We were all feeling quite ill and worn out with anxiety and want of sleep, and at length yielded to her wishes, stipulating that at the least change we were to be summoned instantly ; and I made her promise to call me at five o'clock in the morning in any case. Before the night came my poor cousin, Mrs Arden, showed how completely unfit she was for any more exertion or sitting up, by fainting several times—an unusual thing to happen to her, and one which therefore alarmed us excessively. Her husband could not leave her, and I sat by little Arthur's bedside until Jane took my place. About eight o'clock she came into the room with some beef-tea, and, pointing to the bottle of medicine on the table, I said, " Now remember, Jane, a tea-spoonful of this and one of the beef-tea every hour." I did not examine the medicine again at the time,—oh that I had !—because I was so certain in my own mind that it was the right bottle, having taken it off the mantel-shelf and placed my cousin's cough mixture there instead.

‘I went to bed in the adjoining room, and

from sheer exhaustion slept soundly for some hours. It was broad daylight when I suddenly awoke, and found Jane standing by my bedside with a pale frightened face. "Oh! Miss," she said, "come, come quickly, his pulse is so weak, I think he's going."

'The next instant I was in his room, and my heart stood still as I looked at him and felt his pulse, for I knew he was dying. Without waiting for me to speak, Jane ran down-stairs, sent off for the doctor, and called his father and mother. They were only just in time, for the little fellow was sinking fast, life had almost ebbed away; in vain we tried every kind of restorative, in a few moments his little heart had ceased to beat.' The tears fell fast from Miss Rivers' eyes at this part of her story, and Helen could not help crying with her.

'But how did you find out the mistake?' she asked. 'How dreadful it must have been for you! What had been given him instead of the right medicine?'

'The cough mixture, belonging to my cousin, containing a quantity of opium, which I fancied I had put on the shelf. She had had a bad

cough for some time, and while nursing little Arthur had kept the mixture by her side, taking a spoonful from time to time, so that her cough might not disturb him. The bottle had been freshly filled that day, and in shape and size was exactly similar to the one containing the right medicine ; but how I made the fatal mistake between them I cannot imagine, so well do I remember looking at both most carefully, and placing that which had been sent for the child on the table by the bed. . True, I was ill, and worn out with anxiety and want of rest, still — ; but it is useless dwelling on this now ; had I only taken the precaution of again examining the medicine, all this misery might have been saved. Let this be a warning to you, dear Helen. Remember that in this respect too much care and precaution cannot be taken. The neglect of it has proved fatal in so many cases. You asked me just now how I found out what had happened. In this way : My cousin had been taken out of the room by her husband, and I was left with the little darling. Half stupefied with sorrow and the suddenness of the shock, I remained kneeling by the bedside,

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my face buried in my hands, for how long I know not. Suddenly a loud exclamation roused me, and, looking up, I saw Jane standing near with a medicine bottle in her hand. Her face was very much flushed, and she looked perfectly scared. She didn't wait for me to speak, but pointing to it, said in a whisper, "This was the wrong medicine." I snatched it from her, and the label told me she was right. On the chimney-piece stood the proper mixture untouched; the bottle I held was half empty. I remember saying, "Oh! what have I done?" then, scarcely knowing what I was doing, I rushed from the room, but I must have fallen and fainted, for the next thing I remember was finding myself in my own room, with Jane leaning over me sprinkling water on my face.

'As soon as I could speak, I sent for Mr. Arden, and told him all. I met with the greatest pity and kindness, but I think reproaches would have been easier to have borne. He would not allow my cousin to be told, saying it would be needless cruelty. And I think now that he was right, although at the time I thought otherwise.'

‘And has she never been told?’ asked Helen.

‘No, never! Jane was forbidden ever to mention the subject to any one on pain of instant dismissal.’

‘I suppose it was the opium that killed him,’ said Helen.

‘Yes; it was too strong for a child in his weak state, and sent him into a sleep from which there was no awakening.’

‘It was cruel of Jane to tell you what had happened, I think,’ said Helen, after a pause.

‘She acted on the impulse of the moment; besides, such mistakes should not be concealed, dear.’

‘No; but she might have told Mr. Arden, and left the rest to him.’

‘Ah, well, perhaps so; but at the time I suppose she was too much shocked and surprised to think of my feelings.’

‘But surely she was to blame for not examining the bottle before giving the medicine.’

‘It is of course what should always be done,’ replied Miss Rivers; ‘but she naturally trusted to my carefulness, and you must remember that

there was very little light in the room, and that the label could not easily be distinguished.'

'The doctor was not certain of his recovery,' said Helen. 'Even if you had given him the right medicine he might still have died.'

'Oh, God only knows that, my child! It certainly might have been so, but that is no comfort to me, for it also might have been otherwise.'

'Did you leave England soon after?'

'Yes. I was very ill, and was ordered complete change of scene and climate; my brother kindly offered me a home with him, and I left Derbyshire and came here. It was great pain parting with my cousin, but the sight of her constant grief was too torturing for me to bear. I should have betrayed myself had I remained, and her husband was most anxious that this should not occur. I hear from her very often, and am glad to say she has a dear little baby girl now, so that she is less unhappy. But we mustn't talk of this any more, Helen; I mustn't make you melancholy. It has done me good telling you about it, my child, and perhaps my sad experience may be of use to you some day.'



‘Yes; I am sure that if I ever nurse any one, and have to give them medicine, it will make me very careful.’

‘It should indeed,’ said Miss Rivers impressively, ‘for the self-reproach and misery such mistakes entail are life-long. God grant you may never go through the suffering I have endured! No words could possibly describe it.’





### CHAPTER III.

#### OLD STORIES AND NEW SIGHTS.

**M**ONDAY morning came bright and beautiful, and, at an early hour, Mr. Lancaster and Helen took their places in the *coupé* of the diligence for Lucerne. Although glad to find herself on the road to fresh sights and fresh pleasures, Helen could not but feel very sorry at leaving Basle, where, in spite of her father's accident, she had been very happy. She regretted saying good-bye to little Florence and Lily, and kind Mr. and Mrs. Rivers; but more than all did she regret leaving Miss Rivers, who was quite as sorry to bid farewell to her little friend.

She promised to write to her very often, and to pay her a visit if ever she should come to

Scotland; and, with words of affection on both sides, they parted; away rattled the diligence to the music of jingling bells and cracking whips, and the fair city of Basle, Queen of the Rhine as she is called, was soon left far behind them. After a little time, however, the road became more hilly, and the pace flagged, and then Helen was better able to admire the beautiful country, and to notice the pretty little villages through which they passed, and the picturesque wooden cottages with their projecting roofs, outside staircases, and large adjoining barns, filled with piled up wood. Being in the *coupé*, or front part of the diligence, she could see the country very well; and when, about five miles from Basle, the snowy Alps appeared in sight, her delight was unbounded. Fortunately the day was fine, so that they were seen to perfection, unobscured by mists and clouds.

‘Look at this deep cavern in the rock, papa,’ said Helen, as they were walking up a steep hill. ‘I wonder where it leads?’

‘To some enchanted palace or garden, perhaps,’ answered Mr. Lancaster. ‘It puts me in mind of a story I read in that old German book

our good landlady at the "Three Kings" lent me.'

'Oh, do tell it me!' said Helen.

'It was about a youth called Poor Leonard, a native of Basle, a simple-minded ignorant creature, the son of a tailor, who had heard of a mysterious rocky cavern somewhere near Basle, where an enchanted princess lived surrounded by countless treasures, and guarded by two large black hounds. He contrived to penetrate farther into the cavern than any one had ever done before, holding a consecrated taper which had been given him by a priest to keep off evil spirits. Passing from one vault to another, he at length reached a large beautiful garden where he was completely dazzled by the lovely colours of the flowers. In this garden stood a magnificent palace, and here he found the princess, who was half a woman and half a serpent. She received him most joyfully, and, leading him to a heavy iron chest which the dogs were guarding, showed him the treasures within, and told him they should all be his, and that she would be his wife if he would kiss her three times, when the dread enchantment would be broken. Twice

Poor Leonard kissed her, but the third time his courage failed him, for, overjoyed at the idea of deliverance, the princess danced about with such wild frantic gestures, uncoiling and lashing her tail so fiercely, and the two black dogs began yelling and howling so fearfully, that, terrified out of his senses, he turned and fled from the cavern. Once outside, he began to regret his weakness, and would have gone in again, but some wild companions got hold of him, extinguished his taper, and took him off to a drinking house. After that, so goes the story, he could never again find the entrance to the cavern where the two black hounds are still barking, and the serpent maiden is waiting for the brave youth who is to deliver her.'

'Then it would be no good for me to go in,' said Helen.

'No, nor for me, I'm afraid. She wouldn't care for such an old fellow,' laughed her father. 'So we must leave her where she is, Helen, and jump into the diligence instead; for here we are at the top of the hill, and our blue-bloused coachman is waiting for us.'

As they passed the Lake of Sempach, Mr.

Lancaster reminded Helen of the famous battle which was fought on its shores in 1386, between the Austrians and the Swiss; one of those victories which helped to establish the independence of Switzerland.

‘The battle was going against the Swiss, who, although brave, and fighting as men fight for their liberty, were unable to make the least impression on the well-closed ranks of the better armed and trained Austrian soldiers. Time after time they rushed upon them, only to be driven back by their long lances. A knight of Unterwalden, named Arnold von Winkelried, seeing the hopelessness of such attacks, nobly determined to sacrifice himself for his country; and forming his men into a sort of triangle behind him, he rushed forward, and throwing his arms round as many of the spears as they could hold, buried the sharp points in his breast. Being a man of great size and strength, he thus disarmed those of the enemy nearest him, forming a gap in the ranks, of which the Swiss were not slow to take advantage. The fight then became hand to hand, and the Austrians were totally defeated.’

‘What a noble action, papa!’ said Helen.  
‘There ought to be a poem about it.’

‘There are several. I can read you a ballad on the subject, if you like; and Wordsworth, in one of his poems (*The Church of San Salvador*), thus mentions it :—

‘He too, of battle-martyrs chief,  
Who, to recall his daunted peers  
For victory shaped an open space,  
By gathering with a wide embrace  
Into his single breast a sheaf  
Of fatal Austrian spears.’

‘And the ballad, papa?’ asked Helen eagerly.  
‘Is it one of those which you translated for me while you were ill?’

‘Yes,’ said Mr. Lancaster; and, taking a paper out of his travelling-case, he read as follows :—

#### THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.

##### I.

From Unterwalden’s hills a hero came,  
Bravest of all the brave, renown’d by fame;  
With beauty as an angel bright he shone,  
Yet dark and stern, dreadful to look upon.

##### II.

As though the fight concern’d him not, he leant  
Calmly upon his lance, his fond looks bent  
Upon the hills, where, in the days of old,  
No shrilly battle trumpet’s echoes roll’d;

III.

Where merry pipe, and peaceful Alpen horn  
Sounded from Alp to Alp, by echo borne ;  
Where, free from war's alarms, his fathers dwelt,  
When fear of foreign pride was never felt.

IV.

His spirit wander'd to the chamber where  
His loving, long-loved wife in earnest prayer,  
With trusting heart, but eyes with hot tears dim,  
To God All-merciful commended him.

V.

How deeply deep he felt, is known above ;  
The strong heart's sorrow, or the strong soul's love,  
Man cannot measure, mortal cannot read—  
And this was Arnold Struthan Winkelried.

VI.

From dragon-slayer Struthan's race he sprung,  
Whose knightly fame, by many a minstrel sung,  
Lives, in the land he loved, and bravely freed  
From fear and danger of the dragon's greed.

VII.

Unfastening his breast-plate, on the field  
He threw it clashing down. The dragon-shield  
Over his shoulders slung, and Arnold bore  
No armour but the light chain shirt he wore.

VIII.

Then turn'd he to his brave companions, by  
No doubt or sorrow darken'd was his eye,  
All sinful fear by his strong will's control  
Melted like oil in fire from his great soul.



## IX.

'Be brave, and follow where I make a way;  
Protect my wife and babes, if on this day  
I fall.' Then sprang he on the foe, as bold  
Sir Struthan on the dragon sprang of old.

## X.

And to a giant's size he seem'd to swell,  
With one bold leap among the spears he fell;  
The dragon-slayer's child the foe insults,  
And trembling Switzerland's whole earth exults.

## XI.

On him the eyes of all the battle turn'd,  
His light'ning glance upon the foemen burn'd,  
Blazing as blazed the flames of fiery rain,  
That pour'd upon the cities of the plain.

## XII.

In his long arms the foaming spears he grasp'd  
With giant strength, Death to his bosom clasp'd;  
Lovingly pressing—sweet, such love of death!—  
To his brave heart the shafts that stole his breath.

## XIII.

He fell; but as the falling Alpine rock  
Crushes the trees, so fell before his shock  
The foemen near. Loud is his country's wail,  
But in her corslet, Austria's heart turns pale.

## XIV.

One moment's pause—hush'd is the battle's din—  
Then, shouting 'Victory!' the Swiss rush'd in,  
'Up o'er the Arnold bridge,' 'by Struthan's way,'  
Dash'd the brave Swiss to victory that day.

XV.

Through the wide gap where Arnold's body lay,  
Fierce as the mountain whirlwind they  
Scatter'd the foe, and Austria's iron wall,  
Struck at its base, stood tottering to its fall.

XVI.

There lay the noble dead ! As o'er a deep ravine,  
The bridge that once a noble tree has been,  
Lies mouldering in the spray, above the torrent's roar,  
Fallen itself, yet bears you safely o'er.

XVII.

The rainbow, harbinger of brighter days,  
Before the heavens smile, while yet we gaze,  
Grateful upon its beauty, from our eyes  
Its colours fade ; too soon, alas ! it dies.

‘ I like that ballad very much,’ said Helen, as her father finished reading it ; ‘ and how well you have put it into verse ! Who was Struth Winkelried, the dragon-slaying hero, who is mentioned in it ?’

‘ He was an ancestor of Arnold's, a knight who was banished from Stanz, his native place, for killing a man. Deeply afflicted at being expatriated, and feeling it as none but a Swiss could feel, he spent his days in sorrow and repentance, his one remaining wish being to be buried in the land of his fathers.

‘Time passed on, and at length his desire seemed likely to be granted. A fearful rumour reached him that his country was laid waste by a dragon, and that the people, in fear and distress, had fled to the mountains, the priests alone remaining praying incessantly for a deliverer. On hearing this, Struth sent a messenger to the rulers of the canton, begging that he might return and fight the dragon, adding that his earnest desire was to die for his country. His request was granted, and on landing on his native shores he was surrounded by a large multitude, who led him triumphantly to Stanz.

‘That same day he resolved to confront the dragon; and bidding his friends farewell, he put on his armour, tied a bunch of prickly briars round his spear, and climbed the hill where the monster dwelt. Out he rushed from his cave on hearing Struth’s shouts, and, hissing and foaming, his wild eyes flashing fire at the sight of fresh prey, he leaped down from the height. But as he came open-mouthed towards him, Struth grasped his lance firmly, and standing his ground bravely, thrust his spear with the thorns down his throat, keeping it there with all his strength, inflicting

wound after wound by turning it about, until the dragon, being choked, could struggle no longer, but coiling itself round and round, ended its life in agony.'

'Then Struth was not killed himself after all,' said Helen.

'Yes, he was; for as he brandished his spear on high, joyfully crying "Victory," some of the dragon's venomous blood fell from it upon his face and poisoned him; and as the people rushed down from the neighbouring heights to thank their deliverer, he fell dying to the ground.'

'Thank you, papa,' said Helen. 'Poor Struth, I am sorry he died after all; but he had his wish fulfilled of a grave in his native country. How I should like to have the landlady's old German book with us! It seemed to be full of legends.'

The ballads and the beautiful scenery beguiled the time well; still the drive was a long and dusty one, and the diligence very hot, so that Helen was not sorry when the eight hours came to an end, and Lucerne was reached. Her father would not let her do more that evening than look at the beautiful lake from the windows of their sitting-

room, and after the noise and dust of the journey the rest and quiet were very refreshing.

The next morning was spent in wandering about the town, which in many parts is very old and quaint. Over the river Reuss which divides it are built several very picturesque wooden bridges, some of which are covered, and the roofs lined with curious old pictures, the subjects mostly taken from Swiss history. One of these bridges, that which crosses the mouth of the river, is especially pleasant to linger in on a hot day; for besides obtaining shade, your eyes and ears are refreshed by the sight of the clear, cool blue waters rushing beneath your feet.

Before returning to the early *table-d'hôte*, Mr. Lancaster took Helen to see the principal sight of Lucerne—the celebrated monument erected to the memory of the Swiss Guards who fell August 10, 1792, while defending Louis XVI. and his Queen at the Tuileries during the French Revolution. This monument is the figure of a wounded lion, beautifully carved out of the sandstone rock which forms a cavern at the back; a broken spear is in his side, and the expression of his face shows that he is mortally wounded.



THE LION OF LUCERNE.—PAGE 48.



Close by lies the shield of France, which with one paw he is endeavouring to protect, being true to his trust even in death.

‘These,’ said Mr. Lancaster, drawing Helen’s attention to some letters on the rock beneath the figure, ‘are the names of the officers who fell while defending the Tuileries. How everything is altered! Last time I was here, you could read the names plainly, now they are almost impossible to make out. That lakelet too,’ pointing to a basin of water in front of the sculpture, and in which it was no doubt intended to be reflected, ‘was clear as a mirror, now, it is a stagnant pool; the spot altogether was much more retired and rural; and, to complete the picture, Helen, I was a young man then, instead of an old grey-headed fellow.’

‘Then you must expect to find changes,’ said Helen, laughing; ‘but although everything round it may have altered, the monument must still be the same.’

‘Yes, grander than ever. I must allow that age only improves it. The expression of the face is so touchingly given; see how he grasps the shield, determined that death alone shall take it



from him. The Swiss certainly have reason to be proud of the monument, for although designed by a foreigner, it was a native of Constance who sculptured it.'

'And by whom was it designed?' asked Helen.

'By Thorwaldsen, the famous Danish sculptor. He was the son of a poor wood-carver at Copenhagen, and was born towards the end of the last century. His talent was recognised in his native place, and he was sent to study in Rome, where he eventually settled. There are many beautiful works of his there, which I hope to show you some day.'

'It was just before Louis XVI. was sent to the Temple that the massacre at the Tuileries happened, wasn't it?' asked Helen.

'Yes. The monarchy may be said to have fallen on that day. All the French deserted their King and Queen; the mountaineers of Lucerne alone proved faithful to them. It is frightful to think of the barbarities which were committed by the populace. The few survivors of the Swiss Guards were hunted down afterwards with relentless fury, and, when found, immediately put to death. Deeds too horrible to relate are

told of women, who seem to have been even more forward in crime than were men.'

'Poor Marie Antoinette!' said Helen. 'Don't you think she was very much to be pitied, papa?'

'Yes, indeed I do. I have often heard her compared to Mary Queen of Scots, but to my mind she was a much finer character. Louis XVI. and our Charles I. are perhaps not unlike in character: there is certainly great resemblance in their fates; both were put to death by their own subjects, and both were succeeded by despots—Bonaparte and Oliver Cromwell.'

After looking in at the little chapel close to the monument, where mass is still occasionally said for the heroes of that fatal 10th of August, and having had a little talk with the old Swiss Guard, one of the few survivors, but now dead, Mr. Lancaster and Helen left the place and walked back to the hotel.

The afternoon was pleasantly spent on the lake, where Helen made two or three very pretty sketches. There are two celebrated mountains near Lucerne, one called the Righi, the other Mount Pilate. They are exactly opposite to each other, and from the top of each a most beautiful

view is obtained. The Righi is the one most commonly ascended, as there are several hotels on it, and the height is not very great, it being only 5700 feet above the level of the sea. This, compared to most Swiss mountains, is not very high; the Jung Frau, the queen of the Bernese Alps, being 13,718 feet, and Mont Blanc, the monarch of European mountains, 15,810. Mount Pilate is much wilder-looking than the Righi, with grim grey jagged peaks, and steep stony sides. There is a curious legend attached to it, which cause the Swiss to hold it in great dread. They say that Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, the same who condemned our Saviour to death, when he was banished from Judea to France, wandered about the mountains in misery and despair, and at last ended his life by drowning himself in the lake, on the top of this very mountain. The summit is frequently enveloped in mists and clouds, in which the peasants declare his unquiet spirit may be seen. So rooted was this superstition years ago, that the ascent of the mountain was actually forbidden by the Government of Lucerne.

On hearing this legend, Helen was most

anxious to ascend Mount Pilate, but her father told her she should go up the Righi instead, as he thought it would be the less fatiguing of the two, and the view from the summit was by many considered quite as fine, if not finer, than that from its cloud-capped neighbour.





## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SPOILT CHILD.



DAY or two passed without anything happening of sufficient importance to relate. Helen and her father made some pleasant steamer excursions on the lake, and finished thoroughly exploring the old town. Then came a wet day, the first they had had since leaving England.

‘I shall finish off some of my sketches this morning, papa,’ said Helen after breakfast. ‘It will be a good opportunity, as there is no chance of our going out.’

‘Very well, dear ; then, as you will be busy, I’ll go down to the saloon and read the papers, which I have not done for two or three days.’

Accordingly, Mr. Lancaster went down-stairs,

but had hardly commenced reading the *Times* before a gentleman who was in the room came up to him, and said, 'I beg your pardon, but I believe I am speaking to Mr. Harold Lancaster.'

'Yes, that is my name,' he replied, puzzled as to who the stranger could be.

'It is so long since we have met that it is not strange you shouldn't remember my face, but you can hardly have forgotten the name of Gerald Lee.'

'No, indeed,' cried Mr. Lancaster, shaking hands warmly with him. 'Is it really you, Lee? Why, it must be nearly thirty years since we met; only once, I think, since the old Cambridge days.'

'Only once, and then you were on the point of leaving England for some time.'

'Yes, and on my return I settled in Scotland, and thus lost sight of most of my English friends. But how did you find me out?'

'My wife was struck with the appearance of your little girl, and on learning your name, and making other inquiries, I discovered that you must be my old friend Harold Lancaster.'

Then followed a long and animated talk of

past days, and old friends, in which the morning slipped away unawares.

Mr. Lee started as the clock struck one. 'Can it really be so late!' he exclaimed, surprised. 'I promised to go up-stairs and read to my poor little girl at twelve. Dear, dear, well, it can't be helped. Will you come up with me, Lancaster, and be introduced to Mrs. Lee?'

'With pleasure.' Mrs. Lee, however, was not in the sitting-room, but lying huddled up on the sofa was a little girl crying bitterly.

'Why, Bella, what's the matter?' said her father, taking hold of her. 'Where's mamma, and why are you crying?'

There was no answer. Bella only buried her face deeper still into the sofa cushion, and sobbed on.

'Come, child, don't be so silly,' said Mr. Lee impatiently. 'Tell me where mamma is?'

'I don't know. In her bedroom perhaps.'

'And why are you crying?'

'You—you said you would come and re—read to me, and you—you—didn't,' was the reply, with heavy sobs between each word.

'Is that all?' said Mr. Lee. 'I am sorry I

forgot my promise, I hurried up directly I remembered it. Come, Bella, don't be so childish. Lift up your face. I don't know what Mr. Lancaster will think of you.'

'Nothing very dreadful, we'll hope,' said his friend, coming up to the child and taking hold of her hand kindly. 'You must make friends with my little girl. If papa and I had only thought of it, you might have been together all this morning, for she has also been alone.'

Bella raised her head on hearing a new voice, and looking up into the kind face disclosed her own very woebegone little countenance.

She was a plain sickly-looking child, and the violent fit of crying in which she had been indulging had not improved her appearance.

'What has she been doing all the morning?' Bella asked abruptly.

'Not crying, you may be sure,' said Mr. Lee, injudiciously.

Bella's face darkened again, and Mr. Lancaster, fearing more tears, said quickly, 'I left her drawing. If you like she shall show you her sketches this afternoon.'

At this moment Mrs. Lee entered the room.



She was a small fair-haired woman between thirty and forty, with what would have been a pretty face had it not been spoilt by its silly expression.

After being introduced to Mr. Lancaster, she threw her arms round Bella, and began to kiss and fondle her. 'My poor little darling, don't cry any more. Tell me what it is all about? Didn't papa come and read to you, my precious?' and a good deal more in the same strain, as if she were talking to a child of six instead of to one of eleven or twelve, which was Bella's age.

'Bella has been behaving like a baby, and should be well scolded instead of petted,' said her father impatiently. 'Couldn't she work or read to amuse herself like any other child?'

'You know how weak and painful her eyes are,' replied Mrs. Lee reproachfully. 'Poor darling, I wouldn't have gone to see Mrs. Dacre if I hadn't thought that you would have come up the next moment.'

'Surely crying hurts her eyes more than reading would,' said Mr. Lee. 'I was so busy talking to Lancaster that I quite forgot the hour.'

'Well, I must go and look after my little girl,'

said Mr. Lancaster, not sorry to escape. 'We shall meet at the two o'clock *table-d'hôte*, I suppose?'

'Yes; and if it should clear up this afternoon, we'll have a stroll together,' replied Mr. Lee.

Helen looked up brightly from her drawing as her father entered the room. 'Why, papa, I thought you were lost, you have been away so long. See, I have finished three of my sketches. How do you think they look?'

'Very well indeed,' said Mr. Lancaster, giving the little artist a kiss. 'I must have them framed and hung in my study when we go home.' And then he told her of his meeting with Mr. Lee, his old college friend, and how he had promised that Helen should spend a little time with Mrs. Lee and Bella that afternoon—an arrangement which did not particularly delight Helen, on whom the little fretful girl she had seen on board the steamer once or twice had not made any very pleasing impression.

They met at dinner, and at the end of the wearisome *table-d'hôte* Helen felt less inclined than ever to cultivate Bella's acquaintance, for the child had behaved in the most tiresome manner

the whole time. She was seated between her father and mother, and the frequent appeals to both to be allowed to eat what was not good for her, and the fretful complaints of what she might eat, made her a most unpleasant neighbour.

‘What a remarkably disagreeable child!’ Helen heard an old Frenchman seated next her mutter to himself, and she quite agreed with him, wondering why Mr. Lee did not insist upon better behaviour.

After dinner, Helen accompanied Bella and her mother to their sitting-room, where she remained for some time talking to, and trying to amuse the former, while Mrs. Lee wrote letters. Helen found it hard work. Bella was not easily interested, as the little Rivers had been, in the account of her Scottish home, dogs, and simple pleasures.

‘What a stupid life you must lead!’ was her only remark when Helen had finished speaking.

‘Stupid! oh no,’ replied the other, rather offended. ‘No one can be happier than I am. What do you do at home?’

‘I ride and drive, go out shopping with mamma, play with my dolls, and go to parties,’ was the answer.

‘Parties!’ repeated Helen, into whose quiet life such amusements had never entered. ‘I thought only grown-up people went out to parties. Do you go in the day-time or at night?’

Bella’s contemptuous smile at poor Helen’s innocence was grand.

‘Of course I mean evening parties; dances, with Christmas trees and conjurors. We go at eight, and I never let mamma take me away until eleven or twelve o’clock.’

‘You must be very tired next day, I should think. Don’t you do any lessons?’

‘Sometimes, but not many. Ever since I have had the small-pox my eyes have been very weak, and the doctors said I was not to read much. Will you show me your drawings? your papa said you would.’

‘Yes; I will fetch them now if you like,’ replied Helen; and away she ran to get her portfolio.

‘What are you going to do with this one?’ asked Bella, pointing to a very pretty sketch, mounted on cardboard, of the bridge and cathedral at Basle. ‘I wish you would give it to me to hang in my room at home.’

‘My dear Bella,’ said her mother in a tone of remonstrance, looking up from her writing as the request caught her ear.

Helen coloured. ‘I can’t give you this one, because I have done it for Miss Rivers, and a gentleman who is going to Basle to-morrow has offered to take it to her. You may have one of the others, if you like.’

‘No, thank you,’ replied Bella, pushing them aside; ‘I don’t care for any other.’

‘That is rather ungracious of you, Bella dear, isn’t it?’ said Mrs. Lee. ‘It is so kind of Miss Lancaster to offer you one of her pretty drawings. Will you let me look at them?’ she added, turning to Helen, who laid the portfolio before her, mentally agreeing more than ever with the old Frenchman’s words at dinner. She was not sorry to see her father and Mr. Lee come into the room.

‘No hope of a stroll!’ exclaimed the latter. ‘The weather is worse than ever.’

‘Do you mean to go up the Righi?’ asked Mr. Lancaster.

‘Well, we have been talking of it, but—’

‘Oh, papa!’ interrupted Bella, eagerly, ‘you

promised I should go, and that we should sleep there, and see the sun rise.'

'But, my darling, you are not strong enough to bear the fatigue,' said her father, stroking her hair.

'You promised I should go,' she began fretfully. 'You—'

'Well, well, we'll see about it; but, if you go, you must be carried in a chair, remember.'

'I shan't mind that,' she replied. 'I want to see the people dressed up in blankets, and all the funny things they put on when they go out to see the sun rise.'

'If we go, we shan't sleep there,' said Mr. Lancaster. 'I think it's a great mistake to do so. Ten to one there is no sun-rise, but perhaps a thick fog instead, which was my bad fortune last time, and one has all the discomfort of the place, and catches cold for nothing.'

'So I think,' remarked Mr. Lee, 'but my wife and Bella have set their minds upon sleeping at the top.'

'Oh, yes!' cried the little girl. 'It will be no fun unless we sleep there.'

'And we've promised the dear child she should,'

gently put in Mrs. Lee ; at which speech her husband shrugged his shoulders in silence.

Helen was looking forward with the greatest pleasure to an expedition up the Righi, and was delighted to hear her father again mention it.

‘ When shall we go, papa ? ’ she inquired.

‘ Well, it must be either Thursday or Friday, as I want to leave Lucerne on Saturday.’

‘ Then suppose we arrange to go on Thursday if fine,’ said Mr. Lee ; and, after remaining a little while longer, Mr. Lancaster and Helen went to their own room to write letters.





## CHAPTER V.

### THE TORN SKETCH.



ALTHOUGH not an only child, Bella Lee laboured under the same disadvantage, being several years younger than her brother Gerald, who was an Eton boy of fifteen. They were the only two of Mr. Lee's children who had lived, and Bella had been delicate from her birth. A severe attack of small-pox, when quite young, left her more sickly and puny than ever, besides partially injuring her eyesight. Mrs. Lee was a fond, but not a judicious mother, and by degrees Bella was spoilt and petted into the disagreeable child with whom we have just made acquaintancè. Her father lamented the evil, but did not take proper steps to eradicate it. He scolded and remonstrated, but, for the sake of peace and quietness, generally



gave way in the end to his wife's or to his child's wishes. At first he was determined not to bring Bella to Switzerland, saying very justly that she would be far better at home, left in the charge of her grandmother, who was anxious to have her during their absence. Mrs. Lee, however, would not go without her, and Bella threw herself into such a state at the idea of being left behind, that, as usual, Mr. Lee's wishes were overruled. Sooner than take the child, he would willingly have given up the expedition altogether; but of this his wife would not hear, and accordingly they started, and had left England some three weeks when the Lancasters met them at Lucerne.

'Is it wet or fine, Marjorie?' asked Helen next morning, when her maid entered the room.

'Wet again, Miss!' was the reply, with a little sigh, for travelling was not the fun to Marjorie that it was to Helen, and she already longed for the purple heathered mountains of the Highlands, which, in her opinion, beat these cold snowy Swiss hills all to nothing.

'Poor Marjorie,' said Helen, noticing the sigh. 'I'm afraid you were rather dull all yesterday. Aren't there any English servants in the hotel?'

‘Only one, Miss—Mrs. Lee’s maid; but she’s na muckle gude; the young leddy doesn’t let her have much time to herself.’

‘Well, I daresay it will clear up before the afternoon, Marjorie, and then you can go out. Oh! I hope it will be fine to-morrow for the Righi!’

In the course of the morning Helen spent some time with Bella, trying to amuse her by playing backgammon and other games. She would very much rather have been reading or drawing, but when she saw how pleased Mr. and Mrs. Lee were to see Bella happy, she tried to forget her own wishes.

‘You must write your letter to Miss Rivers directly after dinner, and pack up the drawing as Mr. D. goes off to Basle at four o’clock,’ said her father, as they were going down to the *table-d’hôte*.

‘I hope I shall be free from Bella then,’ thought Helen, for she was bent on writing a nice long letter to her friend, and, not having the pen of a ready writer, would have liked to have been alone for the purpose. Her wish proved fruitless, however, for hardly had she commenced

her letter, when a knock was heard at the door, and in ran Bella.

‘Oh, do let me stay with you!’ she exclaimed. ‘Mamma and papa have gone out, and it’s so dull all alone by myself.’

‘You must be very quiet then, please,’ replied Helen, ‘as I am writing a letter, and have only a short time to finish it in.’

Bella took up a book of pictures at which she glanced for a few minutes, but soon becoming tired of it, she looked about for some other amusement, and espying Helen’s paint-box lying open on the table, asked if she might paint with it.

‘Let me try and copy one of your pictures, do!’

She pleaded so earnestly that Helen could not but give her consent, albeit a reluctant one, for she foresaw the state her paints would be in after Miss Bella had used them.

‘Here’s a nice easy picture for you to copy,’ she said, giving her paper and pencils, and placing the sketch where she could see it nicely.

‘No, no, I want to copy this one,’ cried Bella, taking hold of the drawing Helen was about to send to Miss Rivers.

‘Oh, Bella! take care, or you will spoil it. It is so nice and flat now; I’m just going to send it away; you can’t copy it, there won’t be time.’

‘How cross you are!’ said Bella, pettishly; ‘you are not going to pack it up till your letter is finished; let me copy it till then.’

‘Well, you will be careful not to hurt it then?’

And to save time and trouble, though with many misgivings, Helen placed the sketch at some little distance from the would-be artist, and returned to her letter. Scratch, scratch, scratch went pen and pencil for a little time, then throwing down the latter, Bella said, ‘Now I’ll begin to paint, I’ve done the drawing part.’

Helen gave a sigh of resignation, merely looking up for a moment to see that her sketch was in no danger.

Bella was not long silent. Her little querulous voice was soon heard again. ‘Oh dear! I can’t get the proper red for the cathedral. How did you make it?’

No answer from Helen, who was deep in a description of the wounded lion.

‘Helen,’ sharply, ‘do you hear? How did you make such a bright red?’

‘Oh! Bella, do let me finish my letter; any colour will do.’

‘How ill-natured you are! you might as well tell me.’

‘In a moment, not now. I must finish what I’m saying first.’

Bella, however, would not be repulsed, but teased and worried so, that at length Helen grew angry, and said, ‘I won’t tell you at all now, because you’re so naughty.’

‘You *shall* tell me. How dare you speak so to me! I’ll go to mamma. She’ll be very angry with you,’ cried the child, tears of passion standing in her eyes.

‘I’m sure I wish you would go,’ returned the other impatiently; ‘I don’t want you here.’

At this Bella flew into a regular rage. ‘You are an ill-natured, nasty girl; but I know what I’ll do. How do you like this,’ and before Helen could prevent her, she caught hold of the pretty sketch of Basle, and deliberately tore it in two or three pieces.

Helen turned white with passion, and seizing hold of Bella shook her violently. For a moment or two she was unable to speak; but then words

came, loud angry ones, which she poured forth in a torrent over the now frightened child, who began to scream and struggle. In the midst of the uproar, Mr. Lancaster entered the room, shocked beyond measure at the sight which met his eyes.

‘Helen!’ he exclaimed, astonished; and at his voice she started, releasing her hold of Bella, who threw herself on the floor, still crying violently.

Helen began telling her father what had happened in a loud angry voice.

‘Hush! hush!’ he said. ‘Don’t speak until your passion has subsided. I must attend to Bella. She will be quite ill with all this crying;’ and lifting the little girl from the ground, he carried her into the adjoining room, and after some trouble succeeded in quieting her.

‘Now, Bella,’ he said, speaking kindly, but in a tone of quiet authority to which she was unused, ‘drink this water, and try to stop your sobs.’

Then placing her on the bed, he told her to lie still, and would not allow her to speak. ‘You shall tell me all about it presently, when you are quieter,’ he said. ‘Lie here, like a good child, while I speak to Helen.’

Bella didn’t attempt to dispute his authority,

and Mr. Lancaster returned to his little daughter, who was crying when her father entered the room, although her passion had passed away. The fragments of the drawing were on the table before her, and, pointing to them, she said, 'Look, papa, what she has done! This was for Miss Rivers.'

'Come here, Helen,' said Mr. Lancaster gravely, 'and tell me how it all happened.'

She did so, and, as she finished, sobbed out, 'Oh, papa, I am very sorry now that I was so passionate, but I couldn't help it. I had lent Bella my paint-box and the picture to copy, and it—it was so unkind of her to tear it.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Lancaster. 'I have no wish to screen Bella. She has behaved very badly; but do you think, Helen, that you are altogether free from blame? I am not now alluding to the passion you gave way to—I can't tell you how shocked I was to see you shaking that poor little girl—but to your previous conduct. If, instead of getting angry when she persisted in her question, you had answered her kindly, and taken the trouble to show her what she wanted, all this wouldn't have happened. One moment

spared from your letter, and a little self-control, would have saved your drawing, and, what is of far more importance, would have saved you from the sin of giving way to passion, and thus grieving God. Remember how many excuses there are to be made for a little sickly spoilt child like Bella, and to see you shaking her in that violent manner. Oh Helen !'

There was no need to say more, poor Helen was thoroughly repentant and ashamed of herself, and the next moment she was telling Bella so, with many tears of contrition.

'And you, Bella, are not you sorry to have spoilt poor Helen's drawing ?' asked Mr. Lancaster.

'I shouldn't have done it, if she hadn't been so cross,' replied the child sulkily.

'I am very sorry about it,' said Helen again.

'I am sure Helen is sorry,' said Mr. Lancaster, and, sending her into the next room to finish her letter and pack up one of the Lucerne sketches instead of the other, he continued, speaking gravely but kindly : 'Think how grieved our Saviour is, dear Bella, when you give way to these angry passions. He has



been so good to you in giving you so many blessings that you should pray with all your heart and soul for grace to overcome your faults. You would be so much happier, and every one around you would be so much happier if you were to leave off being cross and selfish.'

Bella was silent for some time, but at length lifting up her face to be kissed, she said, 'I am sorry. I will try to be good.'

'That's right,' said Mr. Lancaster cheerfully ; 'and now, as the rain has ceased, suppose we all have a walk ; and, while you are getting ready, I will take Helen's parcel down-stairs.'

'I don't think mamma will let me go,' said Bella, 'on account of my cold ; but I'll run and ask.'

But Mrs. Lee decided it was too damp for her, and so Helen had her father all to herself for the rest of the afternoon.

They did not, however, walk, but, taking a carriage, drove to a village called Goldau, on the opposite side of the lake, celebrated on account of a dreadful landslide which took place some forty or fifty years ago, from a mountain called the Rossberg, which stands close to the village. This mountain is formed of pudding stone, or

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masses of rock cemented together with clay—a substance, of course, softer than solid rock, and very liable to crack. In very rainy seasons the water penetrates and remains in these cracks or fissures, making the clay moist and soft, and then large pieces fall off. For many years this had occasionally happened, and great damage had been caused, but the most terrible landslide was the last, which took place in September of the year 1806, a year which had been unusually wet, when, after huge fragments of the rock had rolled down from the mountain, and the earth was cracking in all parts, causing the pine-trees to sway and the birds to fly away screaming, the whole side of the Rossberg slowly glided down into the valley. A foolish old man quietly smoking his pipe in his cottage close by, was warned of his danger, but, on looking out and seeing how slowly the mountain was falling, he stayed to fill another pipe. His folly was severely punished, for, before he could leave the house again, the ground slid away from beneath it, and he was buried in the ruins. Houses, chalets, and chapels, besides innumerable human beings, were destroyed in a few minutes. The whole of Goldau was buried

beneath a heap of stones and rubbish a hundred feet in height. Nothing remained but the bell which hung in the church steeple, and which was found a mile off. And not only did Goldau suffer, but all the villages within four or five miles were nearly, if not quite, swept away; some overwhelmed by torrents of mud, others crushed by the weight of the rocks. A party of eleven travellers from Berne had set off the very day of the catastrophe to ascend the Righi. Seven were some little way in advance of the others, and had just entered the village of Goldau when the fearful landslip took place. The other four fled at the sight, and thus saved their lives. Their unfortunate friends of course perished, and their bodies were never found. Among them was the wife of one of the survivors, the son of another, and two pupils under the care of a third. Another village has been built at Goldau, but the Rossberg still remains barren from top to bottom, for nothing will grow upon it.

‘And is there no danger of another landslip?’ asked Helen, as her father finished giving her the above account.

‘Yes, certainly there is, in very rainy seasons,’

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replied Mr. Lancaster, 'but, as you see, all the houses are rebuilt, as is the case with the towns immediately beneath Mount Vesuvius. I suppose the inhabitants do not think that such a terrible catastrophe could happen again, or, at all events, not in their day, and they leave their descendants to take care of themselves.'

The drive home was delightful in the cool of the evening; and as Helen watched the sun setting on the distant mountains, she said, 'We shall have a beautiful day for the Righi to-morrow, I do believe, papa. Shall we start early?'

'Yes, rather early, I think, as we mean to return the same day. You must go to bed in good time, and have plenty of sleep, for to-morrow will be a fatiguing day, on the whole.'





## CHAPTER VI.

### SELF-DENIAL.



HE bright sunshine pouring into her room awoke Helen long before she was called in the morning, and she dressed in the highest spirits, for the sun never shone on a more beautiful day, and a clear view might safely be anticipated from the top of the Righi. Before breakfast was finished, Mr. Lee made his appearance, looking vexed and worried. 'I am sorry to say that Bella's cold is so much worse this morning, and she has such a bad headache that she must stay at home.'

'I am very sorry to hear it,' said Mr. Lancaster ; 'but you and Mrs. Lee will still go, I suppose?'

'I shall, but my wife is so nervous about the child that she won't leave her. Indeed, she is hardly fit for any exertion, having been in and

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out of Bella's room the best part of the night. It really is very tiresome,' and poor Mr. Lee looked quite put out.

'Is Bella getting up?' asked Helen. 'May I go and see her?'

'Do, my dear; she is still in bed.'

Helen found her crying, partly with the pain in her head, and partly with disappointment at being unable to go with the others.

'I am so sorry your cold is so bad; but don't cry, it will make your head so much worse.'

'I can't help it. I am so disappointed,' sobbed Bella. 'I wanted to—to go so much, and it will be so dull all day long. I've nothing to do.'

In vain Helen suggested work, drawing, reading, looking at pictures, etc. Bella said her head and eyes were too painful for anything of the kind.

'Not for that story-book with the very large print?'

'Oh yes, they are.'

'But there's your coarse knitting. You can do that almost without looking.'

'I'm tired of it. It's such stupid work.'

'Well, I wish I could think of something to

amuse you,' said Helen in despair. 'I'm afraid I must get ready now, or papa will be waiting for me.'

'Oh! I wish you weren't going,' cried Bella, 'I shall be *so* dull,' and again the ready tears broke forth.

At this moment Mrs. Lee called to Helen from the adjoining room to come and speak to her. 'Oh, my dear,' she exclaimed, 'do beg Bella not to continue to cry. She will be quite ill. What I shall do with her all day long, I can't imagine, for I feel so ill myself, and quite unequal to any exertion. I think Mr. Lee might stay at home to help me. Men are so selfish.'

'It is such a beautiful day, you see, and the horses are ordered at Weggis,' said Helen, not quite knowing how to answer.; 'and I think Mr. Lee wants to go with papa.'

'I daresay he does,' said the other peevishly, 'but he might give it up for once. The Righti won't run away.'

'I think I had better stay at home,' said Helen, after a moment's consideration. 'I could sit with Bella and amuse her, and then you needn't exert yourself.'

‘You, my dear? Oh, no, *you* mustn’t stay; what would Mr. Lancaster say?’

‘I will ask him,’ Helen replied. ‘If you think I can be of use, I will gladly remain.’

‘I should only be too thankful,’ said Mrs. Lee; ‘but are you sure that you wouldn’t mind staying at home? Certainly there can’t be any very great pleasure in toiling up a long dusty hill in the heat.’

Helen could not help smiling, although feeling rather sore that her sacrifice should be esteemed so lightly. ‘A dusty hill!’ If Mrs. Lee could only have seen the Righi as pictured in her mind, she would perhaps have better appreciated the little girl’s generous offer. Mr. Lancaster was alone when Helen returned to the sitting-room. Although touched by her self-denial, he would hardly have allowed her to have remained at home, had she not assured him of her real wish to do so, although very very sorry to give up the Righi. ‘I think I ought to stay, papa,’ she said humbly. ‘Perhaps Bella’s head would not have ached if she had not cried so much yesterday. You know that was my fault.’

‘Partly,’ replied her father; ‘still, my darling, I hardly like to let you deprive yourself of a



pleasure so long anticipated. Unfortunately Lee has gone on to Weggis to counterorder Bella's chair, or I would put off going till to-morrow.'

'No, no, papa, you mustn't do that. It is such a lovely day, and Mr. Lee would be so disappointed. We can go somewhere else to-morrow, and you shall tell me all about the Righi this evening. Now, mind you take care of yourself, and don't walk about too much at the top, for your ankle isn't well yet, remember.'

Mr. Lancaster felt disinclined to allow her to make the sacrifice, and yet he did not like to check the unselfish feelings which prompted it; so, as the sound of the bell warned him of the steamer's approach, he said, 'It shall be as you wish, dear Helen. God bless you, my child! I shall come home as early as I can. Take a little walk with Marjorie in a quiet part of the town, and ask Mrs. Lee to let you have dinner with her.'

And now, will you be very much shocked with Helen, when I tell you that, after her father left the room, she sat down and had a good cry? Poor child! she really was very much disappointed, although perfectly sincere in wishing to remain

with Bella. She had looked forward so much to the excursion, and had anticipated such pleasure from it in various ways, that I think her tears may be excused. Moreover, they did not last long; she was soon ashamed of them, and jumping up, bathed her eyes in cold water, and returned to Bella. She amused her in every possible way the whole morning, trying hard not to think of the beautiful scenery, wild flowers, and pleasant day that she had lost. Many girls of her age would have agreed with Mrs. Lee, that a hot dusty hill was not worth lamenting; but Helen had a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, the smallest flower did not bloom in vain for her. After dinner she had a short walk with Marjorie, according to her father's wish, returning again to Bella; and although the latter was fretful and exacting, and Mrs. Lee complaining and foolish, Helen's day was not an unhappy one, for one unselfish action is productive of more true happiness than are half the gratified wishes in the world.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LAST EXCURSION.



WOULD you like to go to Tell's Chapel to-day, Helen?' asked her father the following morning.

'Yes, very much indeed. We haven't seen that part of the lake yet.'

'Well, then, we will start by the ten o'clock steamer, if that is not too early.'

'Oh no,' replied Helen, 'I will just see how Bella is this morning, and then I shall be quite ready to go.'

Bella was better, although still confined to her room by her cold. She was in a much more gracious temper than usual; probably. Helen's kindness of the preceding day had not been exerted in vain, for of her own accord, she

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wished her a pleasant day, adding she was so glad it was fine for the excursion.

‘And if we are not home very late this afternoon, I can still read to you, Bella.’

‘Oh, but you’ll be too tired, won’t you? My eyes are better to-day, I’ll try and read to myself.’

On leaving the room, Helen met Mr. Lee, who thanked her warmly for her goodness to his little girl. She felt very hot and uncomfortable under his praises, and longed to run away; but thinking this would appear rude, she waited until he had finished speaking, and then made her escape right gladly, feeling neither puffed up nor conceited, but instead, humiliated and ashamed. And this is the effect praise of our own deeds should always have upon us. However well deserved it may be, a humble, lowly spirit, such as our Lord commended, will invariably feel how little has been done compared to what is left undone. Some such thought as this passed through Helen’s mind, as she recalled Mr. Lee’s praises. ‘If he had only known the wicked angry feelings I had when Bella tore my drawing, he wouldn’t have said what he did.’ And this feeling kept her from being ‘wise in her own conceits.’

Were I not afraid of wearying my young readers, I would describe how lovely the Lake of Lucerne looked that beautiful summer morning, with its snow-capped mountains, rugged and verdant rocks, and deep blue waters. But if they have never seen it, my poor description would give them but a faint idea of its beauties, and if they have seen it, no words can be necessary to recall such a scene to their remembrance.

Mr. Lancaster and Helen visited many parts they had not seen before : lovely retired Alpnach, and Sarnen, where lived the cruel Austrian bailiff of the same name, who put out the eyes of the venerable Henry an der Hulden, father of Arnold von Melchthal, one of the heroes of the Swiss revolution.

‘Do you remember the scene in Schiller’s *William Tell*, Helen,’ asked her father, ‘when Stauffacher rushes in, and, unmindful of Arnold’s presence, relates how the poor old man has been ill-treated, and had his eyes put out by Sarnen?’

‘Yes, and how dreadfully grieved poor Arnold is, because he knows it has happened in consequence of his having beaten the bailiff’s servant, who was sent to seize his yoke of oxen!’

‘For my guilt, in consequence of my crime,’ he cries, nearly heart-broken, and then breaks out into that beautiful speech about eyesight, what a noble heavenly gift it is, how all created things live in the light, and how his father must now sit in the night of eternal darkness. ‘Why do you look at me so pityingly?’ he goes on to say; ‘I have two perfect eyes, and yet can I give neither to my blind father. Not even one glimmer can I give him of the sea of light that my own eyes drink in;’ and again, farther on, he says, ‘Oh, what a cowardly miserable one I was, to think of my own safety and not of thine!’ All that part is most beautiful. This was one of the events which led to the outbreak of the Swiss insurrection.

At Grütli, a sunny green spot under the cliff, Mr. Lancaster and Helen left the steamer, intending to return by the next which stopped there.

‘This place is where the three Swiss champions met and vowed faith to each other and to their native country,’ said Mr. Lancaster.

‘Was Tell one of them?’

‘No; they were Walter Furst, Stauffacher, and Arnold von Melchthal, the same of whom

we have been speaking. Tell had married a daughter of Furst's, and belonged to the league, although he did not take any prominent part in it. He was famous as a marksman, but until the episode occurred of his refusing to reverence Gessler's hat, followed by the story of the apple shot from his son's head, he seems to have led a peaceful domestic life.'

'How long had Switzerland been subject to Austria?' asked Helen.

'Since the eleventh century; but it was not until the beginning of the fourteenth that the yoke became oppressive. The Emperor Rudolf always treated the Swiss with great wisdom and indulgence, but his son Albert, who ascended the throne 1298, behaved to them very differently, and appointed governors in the several cantons, who treated the people most inhumanly, their tyranny passing all belief. Uri was Tell's canton, and Gessler the governor. His cruelty became so unbearable at last, that the poor people could stand it no longer, and were driven to revolt.'

'Did not Tell kill him after he escaped from the boat?'

'He did. He hid himself among some trees,

in a narrow defile, through which the Governor was to pass, and, drawing his cross-bow with unerring aim, shot him through the heart. This action cannot of course be justified ; still we must remember it was not unprovoked, and it is almost the only stain upon the Swiss revolution. Do you know how William Tell met his own death, Helen ?’

‘ In trying to save a child from being drowned in a mountain torrent, didn’t he ?’

‘ Yes. He was quite an old man at the time, and it was a death worthy of his life.’

After a scrambling walk such as Helen delighted in, they reached Tell’s Chapel, erected on the shores of the lake, close to the spot where he leaped ashore when being taken by Gessler to the dungeon of Kussnacht. Here they rested, waiting for the steamer, admiring the beautiful view, and trying to make out the faded drawings which line the walls of the chapel. Then Helen took out her sketch-book, and while she drew, Mr. Lancaster read aloud to her from a volume of Wordsworth’s Poems, which he had brought with him, beginning with these verses written on Tell’s Tower,—



'How blest the souls who, when their trials come,  
Yield not to terror or despondency,  
But face, like that sweet boy, their mortal doom,  
Whose head the ruddy apple tops while he  
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree.  
He quakes not like the timid forest game,  
But smiles, the hesitating shaft to free,  
Assured that Heaven its justice will proclaim,  
And to his father give its own unerring aim.'





## CHAPTER VIII.

SANTA CLAUS.



AM so sorry you are going away, Helen,' said Bella, looking very much inclined to cry, when the moment of departure came, and Helen, ready dressed for the journey, had come to wish her good-bye; 'I wish we were going too. It's so stupid here.'

'Well, I'm very sorry to go,' replied the other, 'I like Lucerne so much; but papa says we mustn't stay any longer if we are to see Chamouni and the Bernese Oberland before going home. Perhaps we may meet again, Bella.'

'I hope so,' said Mr. Lee. 'We do not intend to visit many places, but I have promised my boy Gerald that he shall join us in Switzerland when the Eton holidays begin; so, perhaps, we

shall meet as you return. How long do you intend staying at Berne, Lancaster ?'

'Only a day or two ; we shall push on to Ouchy, I think, and stay there a little while before going on to Chamouni.'

'Well, I daresay we shall get as far as Geneva in process of time. Mrs. Lee has friends there whom she is anxious to see.'

'Good-bye ; I am so glad we have met once more,' said Mr. Lancaster, shaking hands. 'Perhaps some day we may be able to persuade you to pay us a visit in our quiet Highland home. Helen would be delighted to welcome Bella there.'

'Thank you, my dear, for all your kindness to Bella,' said Mrs. Lee, as she kissed Helen. 'I am sure she will miss you dreadfully.'

The latter felt quite sorry to leave the poor little girl, when she threw her arms round her neck, crying out, 'Oh how I wish you were my sister, and then you would never leave me !'

Perhaps Helen could hardly echo the wish, for poor Bella was very different from the sister she would have desired to possess ; but, nevertheless, she felt touched by the child's words, and kissed her warmly as she wished her good-bye.

‘What a pity it is that poor child has been so spoilt with over-indulgence!’ said Mr. Lancaster, as they drove along.

‘Yes, it is, for I am sure she has a great many good qualities; among others, a very affectionate nature,’ replied Helen.

‘I wonder what the boy is like. Lee seems very proud of him.’

‘Do you mean Bella’s brother, Gerald? She says he teases her dreadfully.’

‘I don’t wonder at it; a boy of that age has seldom much mercy for a fretful, spoilt child, although, of course, teasing doesn’t mend the matter. Poor little girl! I am afraid her life will not be a very happy one. Did you hear from Miss Rivers this morning, Helen?’

‘Yes, papa, such a nice long letter! She is so pleased with the sketch, and says it makes her long to see Lucerne more than ever.’

‘Has she never been there?’

‘No; but she hopes to go when the railway is completed. She enclosed a funny little note from Florence. There are a great many German words in it which have been crossed out, I suppose by Mrs. Rivers. She says in the postscript,

that when she puts out her stocking on Christmas Eve, she means to ask Santa Claus to send her a large dog like my Gellert. What does she mean by Santa Claus, papa ?'

Mr. Lancaster laughed. 'Claus is the German for Nicholas, and it is the custom in Germany and Switzerland for children to hang their stockings at the foot of the bed on Christmas Eve for Santa Claus to fill with presents. He is the patron saint of children, especially of school-boys.'

'Is there any story about him, papa ? Do tell it me.'

'There is no end to the legends and stories about him, some are most quaint. He is supposed to have been an extraordinary child from his birth, and to have spoken the first day he was born. He grew up with a remarkable love for holy things, and became a priest. His father and mother died when he was very young, and left him great riches, which he bestowed in charity. Hearing that a nobleman in the city where he lived was very poor indeed, and had three daughters who were nearly starving, he one night hid up some gold in a handkerchief and took

it to the house. The door was open, and, looking in, he could see the three poor girls asleep in one bed, at the foot of which their father was sitting weeping. St. Nicholas did not wish to be seen, and at the same time was puzzled how to leave the money without this happening. Suddenly, however, the moon came out from behind a cloud, and showed him an open window through which he could throw the handkerchief unseen. It fell at the father's feet, who was overjoyed at the sight of the gold. By its aid, so says the story, he was enabled soon after to marry off his eldest daughter. St. Nicholas came a second time to the house, and threw in more gold, with which the second daughter was portioned. When the saint came the third time the father was on the watch, and discovered him. St. Nicholas, however, desired him to tell no one what had occurred, and the father, with many thanks and blessings, promised to obey him.

‘According to another story, he was made Bishop of Myra, where a dreadful famine was raging, and a great many ships laden with wheat having entered the port, St. Nicholas went to the captains of the vessels demanding 100 hogsheads

of wheat from each. This they refused, saying that the wheat had been measured at Alexandria, and must be put untouched into the emperor's granary. The saint, however, persuaded them with the assurance that when they should discharge their cargo no loss would be felt. They believed him, and found, on arriving at Constantinople, that he had told them truly. It was during this same famine that his greatest miracle is said to have been performed. As he was travelling through his diocese visiting the people, he chanced to lodge with a man who, in consequence of the scarcity of provisions, was wicked enough to steal little children whom he murdered, cut into pieces, and served up as meat to his guests. St. Nicholas, however, had no sooner cast his eyes on the dish than he discovered the wicked fraud. There was a tub in the room containing the remains of three of these unfortunate children. He approached it, and had no sooner made the sign of the cross over it, than up they sprang, whole and well !

‘And what was done to the wicked man, papa ?’

‘Probably he escaped. I have seen a curious

old picture of St. Nicholas with his crosier and mitre, standing over a tub in which are the three restored boys ; while a man, most likely the host, is slinking out of an open door at the back.'

'Is that all, papa ? Do, please, tell me some other legends of saints, I like them so much !'

Mr. Lancaster considered for a moment, and then said, 'I can tell you one about St. Barbara, if you like ; but I don't think I know any other. It is rather interesting, and I think you will like it.'

'I am sure I shall,' said Helen.

'It is an eastern legend, St. Barbara being the only daughter of a very wealthy man of Helio-  
polis. She was singularly beautiful ; and her father, not wishing to part with her, shut her up in a very high tower, where she was secluded from the eyes of men. Barbara gave herself up to reading and thought in her solitude, and was also wont to study the stars from the summit of her tower. The result of it all was that she came to the conclusion that her parents were wrong to worship idols of wood and stone, being convinced that these could not have created the wonders of Nature. But for all this she knew not the true



faith. The fame of a certain sage, called Origen, who taught a new and holy religion, reached her ears, and her father being absent she sent to him secretly. He wrote to her, and sent one of his disciples, disguised as a physician, who converted and baptized her. Before leaving home, her father had ordered a bath-chamber to be added to her tower ; and one day St. Barbara, while watching its progress, desired three windows to be inserted instead of two. When her father returned he was displeased, and asked her why she had interfered with his orders, whereupon she told him she had done it in honour of the Holy Trinity, for the soul received light through three windows—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He was violently enraged at finding she had become a Christian, and barbarously murdered her with his own hand ; but he was justly punished for his cruelty, being himself killed by lightning the next moment. St. Barbara thus became the patron saint of architecture, and was considered a protection against thunder and lightning.’

‘ Thank you, papa, very much,’ said Helen, as he finished speaking. ‘ How curious these old

legends are ! Do you think there is any truth in them ?'

'No, my child ! They must be regarded merely as pretty allegories ; and as such, we can safely seek and find in them both pleasure and profit.'





## CHAPTER IX.

### BERNE AND ITS BEARS.

**H**ELEN was delighted with Berne, that quaint old city, with its numerous arcades, fountains, statues, and bears. Here, too, she first saw the Swiss costume, for at Lucerne it is almost entirely given up, and is now fast dying out even at Berne. The gay varied dress, velvet boddices, bright ribbons, and large straw hats, decorated with bunches of flowers, produced the prettiest effect possible. A great pity is it that the national costume will so soon be completely forsaken. But if she was charmed with the curiosities of the old town, what were her feelings when, from the terrace walk at the back of the cathedral, she first caught sight of that magnificent view which is the glory of Berne. She looked down on a lovely green

valley through which flowed the river, shining like molten gold ; while behind it, rising one above another, were six or seven snow-capped peaks, glowing in rosy hues caught from the setting sun. Helen could find no words in which to express the pleasure this scene gave her ; and when her father, turning to her, said, ' Isn't this a glorious view, Helen ? ' a choking feeling in her throat, as though she were going to cry, prevented her from answering. Intense love and thanksgiving to the Creator of so much beauty filled her heart, for true it is that ' a deep love of nature has in it something of a religious character ; ' while gazing on the sublime works of our Heavenly Father our feelings are softened and our hearts expand. Although so young, Helen was sensible of this feeling ; and as she gazed on the lovely view, her heart overflowed with gratitude to Him by whose hand it had been created.

Most amusing are the numerous grotesque figures of bears which are placed all over the town, in every kind of attitude and dress. Two, larger than life, stand as sentinels on either side of the gates through which you enter. There are also several real bears kept at the public expense,

which are well worth a visit. Every Sunday afternoon the pit in which they are is crowded with Bernese, who never seem to be tired of watching their gambols.

‘You must be careful how you lean over the railings, Helen,’ said her father, as she was throwing the animals cakes and biscuits, an abundant supply of which, of too uninviting a nature for anything but a bear to eat, can be procured from an old woman’s stall close at hand. ‘A few years ago an Englishman lost his balance, and fell over into the pit, and, although there were numerous bystanders at the time, and, as you see, plenty of houses near, the poor fellow was mauled to death before any assistance was rendered him.’

‘Oh, papa, how shocking ! Did no one try to save him ?’

‘I believe not. I know it was thought at the time that the Bernese behaved very badly. I think there have been some extra railings put up since.’

This was the first time Helen had ever seen a bear, strange as it may seem to those to whom the Zoological Gardens have been well known

from infancy. But Helen's life had been too retired for such sights, and if you are as fond of animals as she was, you will acknowledge that she had lost a good deal of pleasure. She could scarcely tear herself away from the creatures, and Mr. Lancaster, seeing how pleased she was with them, good-naturedly let her stay as long as she liked. As they walked home he told her that there were a great many different kinds of bears : the brown bear (which she had just seen), a native of northern Europe, the most good-tempered of the Ursine family, feeding chiefly on honey and vegetable matters, and only becoming carnivorous when the forest supplies fail ; the black bear from North America, similar in its habits and nature to the last-named one ; the Syrian bear, so often mentioned in Holy Scripture ; the sloth bear, a native of India—a dangerous enemy to encounter on account of his long reversed nails ; the grizzly, the most ferocious and the hardest of all to kill ; the sun bear, the Himalayan, the Japanese, and, lastly, the beautiful white Polar bear.

‘In Sweden,’ said Mr. Lancaster, ‘when a bear begins to kill the cattle, the neighbourhood

rises up in arms, and forms what is there called a *skall* to kill him.'

'What is a *skall* ?'

'It is composed of several hundred men who form a cordon and surround the animal, gradually contracting the lines, until it is within reach of fire-arms. When there is going to be a *skall*, the clergyman gives notice of it from the pulpit, stating how many men each village is to provide, and where they are to meet.'

'What a funny custom, papa !'

'Yes, but in Sweden all public announcements, even those of auctions, are made from the pulpit. Unless prevented by illness, every one is bound by law to go to church.'

'Are not the Norwegians very superstitious with regard to bears ?' asked Helen.

'Yes, and the Red Indians are equally so. A Norwegian never speaks of one without words of praise, and seldom calls it by its real name. An Indian never kills one without apologizing for the deed, and, when dead, decorates it, and makes a speech to it in praise of its courage. All those who eat of the flesh are supposed to be endowed with its strength.'

‘And the sun bears, papa,—have you anything to tell me about them? I suppose they get their name from basking in the sun?’

‘Yes, they do. They come from Sumatra, and are sagacious good-natured creatures, I believe. I read an account the other day of one which a gentleman had so thoroughly tamed and domesticated that it was brought up in the nursery with his children, and frequently came down to dinner with them. He was a bear of good taste, preferring champagne to any other wine, and the only time that he is ever reported to have been out of temper was once when disappointed of his favourite drink. I hardly think I could have trusted a bear with my little Helen though, however amiable he might have appeared.’

Helen laughed. ‘I am very glad the fancy never entered your head, papa. I hope it won’t do so now, for I shouldn’t at all like one of those rough-coated gentlemen we have just parted with for a brother.’

‘The Polar bear is my favourite,’ said Mr. Lancaster. ‘It is such a beautiful creature, I can’t bear to see it in confinement.’



‘ Does it never come out of the ice regions ?’

‘ Never of its own accord ; but it sometimes happens that, after a very plentiful dinner, the animal goes to sleep on an ice raft, which not unfrequently breaks off and floats out to sea. Very often the bear is carried a great distance, and unless it falls in with a ship and is killed, it is forced to land on some unknown shore, where, being entirely out of its element, it loses its courage, and soon falls a victim to the natives.’

‘ What is its usual food ?’ asked Helen.

‘ Seals, walruses, the flesh of dead whales, and even sea-weeds, when nothing better is to be had. And now for some different kinds of bears, Helen. Here we are at the old Clock Tower, and it only wants two or three minutes to two o’clock. Shall we wait and see the procession come out of the clock ?’

‘ Yes ; I should like to see it,’ said Helen.

Accordingly they waited, and, directly after the hour had struck, a little door flew open at the top of the tower, and out came a wooden cock crowing and flapping his wings. Then appeared a number of bears, who marched in procession round the tower, passing in front of a figure seated on a throne, who acknowledged

their presence by gaping and lowering his sceptre. Then they popped into the little door again, to rest until another hour had passed by, when the same performance would be repeated.

‘I don’t think much of it,’ said Helen; ‘do you, papa? I wonder why the bear is such a favourite here?’

‘I believe it gave its name to the city in this manner:—One Berchtold of Zühlingen was the founder of Berne, and being at a loss for a name, he gave notice at a large meeting of all the nobles in the neighbourhood, that the animal which was first killed at the chase on the following day should give its name to the new city. The bear was the first victim. And now, I am sure, you would like to buy some of these tempting-looking figures,’ continued her father, as he took her into one of the numerous shops filled with wood carvings. ‘Can’t you find an ornament for your room at home?’

Somewhat puzzled what to select among so many pretty things, Helen’s eyes wandered round and round the little shop until they finally rested upon a pair of grotesque bears, intended to hold candles. ‘I think I should like these for my mantel-shelf, papa.’

‘Very well; and now choose something for Miss Selby.’

‘Perhaps she wouldn’t care for bears,’ said Helen, looking wistfully at some wonderful groups of these animals, represented in every imaginable position and attitude.

‘I don’t know that,’ said Mr. Lancaster. ‘What do you think of this box for her work?’ showing her a beautifully carved box with a group of bears on the lid.

‘Oh! that is beautiful, the inside lined with red velvet; just the thing!’

‘And now we must send some of these funny-looking creatures to Florence and Lily; eh, Helen?’

‘Oh yes, I should like to send this great big fellow sprawling on his back, with the cub in his arms, to Florence; and this dancing one to little Lily. Thank you, dear papa! I’m sure they will be pleased with them.’

The purchases completed, they hastened back to the hotel, and Helen was soon busily engaged writing a long letter to her little friends, to accompany the presents which were to be forwarded by the diligence the following morning.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

**N**EXT day the Lancasters went on to Freyburg, a picturesque old town not far from Berne. It is remarkable for the beauty of its situation, overhanging, as it does, the gorge of the River Saarine; for its suspension bridges; and, above all, for the wonderful organ in the Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas. This Helen was most anxious to hear, but, until they had arrived at the hotel, she was not sure whether her wish could be gratified, as, unless there are a certain number of people to hear the performance, it does not take place. It happened fortunately, however, on this day, that a party was soon made up, and, at a given time, they were all assembled at the church. The piece performed on the organ ended with an

imitation of a storm ; very low and soft at first, then gradually louder and louder, introducing thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, together with the cries and shrieks of those perishing in the raging elements. Suddenly there came a lull, and then was heard, as at a little distance, the sound of human voices chanting their thanksgivings to heaven for being saved. This last part was wonderfully executed. It was almost impossible to believe that the organ was the only instrument, and that the voices imitated were not real ; so thrilling and sweet were they, like the voices of the boy choristers in our cathedral choirs. Helen and her father agreed that it was well worth coming all the way from Scotland to Freyburg, merely to hear this beautiful organ, which is said to be the finest in Europe.

After leaving the church they walked over the nearest iron suspension bridge, which is remarkable for being the longest of a single span in the world, being 361 feet longer, and 50 feet higher, than that of the Menai bridge in North Wales. The new suspension bridge at Clifton in Somersetshire, however, has surpassed it in height to the extent of 60 feet, and it is also nearly 8 feet

wider, but not so long by 238 feet. The workmen employed on this beautiful structure (at Freyburg) were all Swiss, and, with one exception, had never seen anything of the kind before. When finished, its appearance was so fragile that great fears were entertained of its safety ; these soon vanished, however, when it was found that 15 pieces of artillery, 50 or 60 horses, and 300 people could cross over at the same time, and even be collected together in the centre, without causing the bridge to vibrate in the smallest degree.

Our travellers next visited Ouchy, a small place on the margin of the Lake of Geneva, and here they stayed for some days, exploring the beauties of the lake, with which both Helen and her father were much pleased, although they could not quite agree with Voltaire, the celebrated French writer, who used to place it above all the other Swiss lakes, saying, *Mon lac est le premier*.

The south end is fully described by Lord Byron in his beautiful poem of *Childe Harold*, many parts of which Mr. Lancaster read aloud to Helen as they wandered by its shores and

sailed on its green waters in the summer evenings,—

‘ Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake  
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing  
Which warns me, with its stillness to forsake  
Earth’s troubled waters for a purer spring.  
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
To waft me from distraction ; once I loved  
Torn ocean’s roar, but thy soft murmuring  
Sounds sweet as if a sister’s voice reproved,  
That I with stern delights should e’er have been so moved.’

These lines are the commencement of the description of the lake in a calm, then follow some grand verses descriptive of it in a storm.

Between Vevay and Villeneuve, two towns on the south end of the lake, is the renowned Castle of Chillon, of which Helen had often heard and read. It is picturesquely situated on a rock, nearly, but not quite, surrounded by deep water, and can only be approached from the shore by a drawbridge. It was built about 600 years ago by the Dukes of Savoy, for in those days Geneva belonged to Savoy and not to Switzerland, and was used by them as a state prison. Many of the early Reformers, and all those of any note who rebelled against the iron rule of these cruel dukes, being kept as



THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.—PAGE 112.





prisoners in the dungeons of the castle. Having read Lord Byron's beautiful story of the *Prisoner of Chillon*, Helen was much interested in seeing the place. Mr. Lancaster told her that the poem did not give the real history of the prisoner, Bonnivard, who, in 1530, in consequence of his efforts to free the Genevese from the tyranny of the Savoyards, was seized by the duke's orders and carried off to this castle, where for six long years he was buried in its deepest dungeon. They saw the place, a melancholy prison indeed, level with the waters of the lake, but not so bad now as in Bonnivard's time, when the dungeon was divided by several walls so as to form numerous small cells, in one of which he was confined. A chain, probably not more than four feet in length, was fastened round his body, and attached to an iron ring at the other end of his cell. In this confined space he languished for six weary years, when he was set free by the Genevese, who, aided by the Bernese, freed themselves from the Savoyard yoke, and delivered Bonnivard and the other captives from their misery. Geneva then became, and has since continued, a Protestant state.

The guide who showed the castle to the Lancasters pointed out many places where were relics remaining of the cruelty of those wicked Dukes of Savoy. In one room Helen saw a high pole with a pulley at the top : this was used to torment the prisoners who would not confess their guilt ; they were drawn up to the top, and there had their shoulders put out of joint, or their fingers broken, until the horrible pain wrung a confession, true or untrue, from their lips. In another room she saw a broken niche in the wall, and below it a square opening in the floor. In this niche, the guide told them, there formerly stood an image of the Virgin Mary, before which the unhappy prisoner about to die was told to kneel and pray. Afterwards he was thrown through the opening in the floor on to a quantity of sharp knives, which, revolving round and round by machinery, hacked him to pieces. This dreadful hole was called *the oubliette*, which means a place of forgetfulness.

The castle is now only used as a magazine for military stores.

Although much interested in Chillon and its dismal associations, Helen gave a sigh of relief

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on finding herself once more in the bright sunshine and fresh air. The return home was very pleasant.

At Vevay, the boat stopped to take on board the peasant girls who, gaily dressed and laden with bright flowers and fruits for the market, had been left there in the morning. They made a pretty group at the end of the steamer, and were quickly transferred to Helen's sketch-book, much to their delight when they saw themselves figuring therein.

The next morning was spent at Lausanne in toiling up the steep dirty streets in the hot sun to the different platforms which command lovely views over the Lake of Geneva. The cathedral is situated on one of the highest of these terraces. Helen felt very glad she was not obliged to toil up to it every Sunday, although certainly the view repaid her for the fatigue. The exterior of the cathedral is picturesque, but the inside is Gothic and very beautiful, with fine arches, clustered columns, and a circular east end, or *apse*. Being a Lutheran Church, there is little ornament about it, and hardly any stained glass, which is to be regretted.

Among the numerous monuments is one to Bernard de Menthon, the founder of the hospice on the mountain of the Great St. Bernard, which takes its name from him. Mr. Lancaster told Helen that he lived about the year 923, and that he was a Roman Catholic priest, who devoted himself to the task of converting the inhabitants of the mountains of Savoy where he was born. At that time it was the custom for people to make pilgrimages to Rome, and a great many crossed the Alps for that purpose, while Bernard de Menthon was preaching among them. He saw and lamented the great difficulties and dangers to which they were subjected on their way, and the idea struck him one day that convents might be built on the most desolate parts of the road for the help and accommodation of these pilgrims. Accordingly, he caused two large buildings to be erected, in which he induced some Augustine Monks to take up their abode for the purpose of receiving travellers, and looking for those who were lost in the snow. These hospices were afterwards called the Great and the Little St. Bernard. The monks kept then, as they do now, a large number of dogs of a peculiar Spanish

breed, who help them to discover the poor people buried in the snow, and are very often the means of saving their lives.

‘Have you ever been there, papa?’ asked Helen.

‘Yes, I was there a great many years ago, and was very much interested in the place. It was in the autumn, and bitterly cold. I remember very vividly how still and gloomy everything looked as we approached the hospice. The path was rugged and wild, and snowy peaks surrounded us on all sides. There were no signs of vegetation : it was too high for that ; and we shivered miserably as we drew near to the dark looking lake, and cold grey building, from which no lights shone out. Once inside, however, things changed for the better ; we were soon receiving two warm welcomes, one from our hosts, and one from the pleasant wood-fire. We were entertained most hospitably, and found the brethren pleasant, intelligent companions. I believe now that the accommodation is very much improved. There are more comforts in the bedrooms, and a drawing-room has been made for the convenience of ladies. It is provided with books, and hung with pictures, which people have

sent as presents. The other day some lady sent a pianoforte, so that the Mount St. Bernard is not such a bad place to be weatherbound at after all.'

'No, indeed, I think it must be very amusing. Do you pay for staying there?'

'Yes, in this way. There is a poor-box in the Chapel, in which you are expected to put in as much money as the same accommodation would have cost you at an inn. Many people give more, because the monks are known to be very charitable in giving alms to the numerous poor travellers who pass over into Italy.'

'What do they do with the bodies of those found dead in the snow?' asked Helen.

'They are placed in a building a little way from the convent, called the Morgue, or receptacle for the dead, where they may be seen by their friends should they happen to cross the mountain. The air is so cold that their bodies are a long time decaying, and on some the clothes have remained untouched for eighteen years.'

'Are the monks old or young men?' inquired Helen.

'They must be young, or they could not stand

the severe climate,' replied her father. 'Usually they enter on their good work at the age of eighteen, and few are able to remain longer than fifteen years. The dogs seldom live more than nine. Imagine what it must be to pass the best years of your life in a place where it often happens that not a week passes without snow, and where even in summer the ice seldom melts. Think what these men give up—all the ties of kindred, and all that most delights the eye, and is soft and pleasant in nature.'

'But they have very grand scenes instead, and then how much good they do.'

'Yes, of course, that is their reward. As for the grand scenes, they must soon weary of them, and long for something less sublime.'

'Did Bernard de Menthon live to see the success of his scheme?' asked Helen as they left the cathedral.

'Yes, he was a very old man when he died, nearly ninety I believe; so that he must have died happy in knowing the great service he had rendered to his fellow-creatures.'

Before leaving Lausanne, Mr. Lancaster showed Helen the house where the great English histo-



rian Gibbon lived, and where a great portion of his *History of Rome* was written. They walked through the hotel which bears his name, and which includes part of his house, and entered the garden, in which they rested for some time after their hot fatiguing expedition.

Helen would have been very sorry to leave Ouchy, with its pleasant hotel and garden, for hot uninteresting Geneva, had not the latter place been on the high road to Chamounix, Mont Blanc, the glaciers, and to real mountain scenery, of which she had as yet seen but very little, except at a distance. There was also another reason which rendered the prospect of Geneva inviting. Before starting for Switzerland, Mr. Lancaster had told her that if they happened to go there he would give her a watch—a most delightful promise to Helen, and one which she was in no danger of forgetting. But did her father remember it? Of that she could not be quite sure, as nothing had since been said on the subject, but she hoped very much that he would.

To have a real watch of her own, seemed about the most delightful thing that could happen ;

and when Geneva was actually reached, and the pretty watches in the shop windows before her eyes, she was in a state of no little excitement. Mr. Lancaster began to speak of John Calvin, the great Reformer, who had lived and died at Geneva, but although usually so pleased to hear all her father could tell her, that day Helen's attention could not be fixed, but went wandering off at every moment to the shops and watches.

Mr. Lancaster was not long in perceiving this, and looking into her face with a smile, said, 'We'll let John Calvin rest in peace, I think, Helen. Suppose we buy a watch instead?'

Up went the bright colour into Helen's cheeks. 'Oh, papa! Then you haven't forgotten?'

'No, indeed, although I daresay it looked like it; but this will show you that I did not,' he added, taking out his pocket-book in which was written down the address of the best watchmaker in Geneva. 'The street is close by, so we'll go there at once.'

A few minutes later, and Helen, almost bewildered with delight, was trying to choose a watch from about fifty of all kinds and sizes,

which were placed before her eyes. Some were hardly larger than a shilling : these she rejected at once, as, although very pretty, they were too small to be of any use ; but there were others with the backs beautifully enamelled in green and blue, one especially with blue forget-me-nots on a gold ground, by which she was greatly tempted. Her father, however, advised her to choose one less ornamental, as he did not think the enamel would wear well. So, rather reluctantly, she gave up all idea of the forget-me-nots, and turned to the plainer ones. A first watch is an important business, and Helen was a long time choosing hers. She was vexed to keep her father waiting so long, but he was very good-natured about it, telling her not to hurry, at the same time advising her to put aside the six she liked best of those before her, and to make her choice from them. In this way she was at length able to make up her mind, and eventually left the shop the happy possessor of a particularly pretty watch and chain.

‘It’s actually six o’clock, I declare,’ said Mr. Lancaster, as they entered the hotel.

‘Oh, papa!’ said Helen, remorsefully, ‘what

an immense time I must have kept you in that place !'

'Never mind that,' said her father ; 'but are you sure you chose the one you liked best after all ?'

'Oh yes, papa, quite sure ; and I never, never can thank you enough for it.'

The following day chanced to be the anniversary of some event which had happened during the time of the Reformation, and in consequence every shop was closed, and none of the museums or other sights allowed to be seen.

'It was lucky that we bought the watch yesterday,' said Mr. Lancaster, as they drove through the dull deserted streets. 'I don't think you will miss much by not seeing the museums, for, if I remember rightly, there was very little worth seeing there ; we must drive into the country instead.'

A little way out of the town they stopped to see the meeting of the two rivers, the Rhone and the Arve, which, for some distance, flow together side by side in two distinct streams ; the colour of the Rhone is the most beautiful blue imaginable, but that of the Arve a dingy brown.

‘Do the two rivers keep apart altogether?’ asked Helen.

‘For some distance they do, but then the Arve, like an evil companion, succeeds in tarnishing the Rhone’s brightness. Little by little, the beautiful blue colour fades until the last streak disappears, and the two rivers, mingled together, forming one brown muddy stream, flow on until they reach the sea.’

Afterwards they drove to Ferney, where Voltaire lived for nearly twenty years; and then they returned home, visiting Calvin’s house on the way. Calvin was by birth a Frenchman, and originally a Roman Catholic Priest, but was converted and became one of the most rigid Reformers. In the year 1536, he first came to Geneva, which place was then the refuge for all the persecuted Lutherans. He was made Dictator of the Republic, and, according to all accounts, tyrannized severely over the people, not only in religious and public matters, but even in their most private affairs; such as how their servants were to be dressed, and the number of dishes they were to have for dinner. John Knox was another famous Reformer who took refuge in Geneva.

It was, besides, the birthplace of many other celebrated people : Rousseau, the French philosopher ; Necker, the unfortunate minister of Louis XVI. ; Madame de Staël, a well-known French writer ; Huber, the celebrated naturalist ; Sismondi, the historian ; and some others.





## CHAPTER XI.

### NEW ACQUAINTANCES.



ELL, Helen, here are the glaciers at last,' said her father, as they approached Chamounix a day or two later. 'You have been longing to see them; now tell me what you think of them?' Helen stood up in the carriage to get a better view.

'Do you mean that dirty-looking ice, papa? Is *that* a glacier? Oh, how I should like to give it a good scrubbing with soap and water.'

Mr. Lancaster laughed at her tone of disappointment. 'Wait until you are on the Mer de Glâce, Helen. You'll find the ice there wants no scrubbing. In this instance distance certainly does not lend enchantment to the view.'

On arriving at the hotel, Helen speedily forgot her disappointment in the glaciers, as Mont Blanc,

without even a fleecy cloud to hide its glory, stood out before her. Much as she had thought and heard of it, the reality far surpassed her expectations. She found, however, that her impressions were not universal ; for, while sitting in the saloon after dinner, she overheard many more complaints and depreciatory remarks on the mountain, and Switzerland in general, than the reverse ; until at length she began to wonder why people took the trouble to come abroad at all, since they were determined to be dissatisfied with everything.

‘ Ah, you mustn’t expect every one to see with the eyes of fourteen !’ said an old gentleman with whom she had made friends at the *table d’hôte*, and to whom she said something of the kind. ‘ Why, even sixteen and seventeen have thrown aside their rose-coloured spectacles,’ he added, smiling and looking at his two daughters, who were seated near him.

‘ Now, papa,’ said the younger of the two, a short, handsome girl, with a very high colour and dark curly hair cut close to her head, in boyish fashion, ‘ you know I never pretended to care for mountains and waterfalls, and all that kind of



thing. I'd far rather see one of our English downs before me, and be galloping over it on Selim !'

'True, Di. You never even attempted to wear the spectacles ; but I remember the time when, to use her own words, Julia was wild to travel.'

At this speech the elder daughter, a slim, graceful-looking girl, lifted her eyes from the book she was turning over, and said in a languid manner, 'That was because I was so tired of our dull country life, papa. I thought travelling would be more amusing ; but we have had no adventures, and I am beginning to think it was a mistake coming to Switzerland, where no one thinks of anything but walking up these tiresome mountains, and getting up at unearthly hours to see a sunrise.'

'I am sure I would far rather be at the old home,' said her father. 'So, you see,' turning to Helen, 'as very often happens, we don't any of us know why we are travelling, and we are all terribly bored.'

Helen could not help smiling at his comical tone of voice. 'I am very glad papa and I are not

bored, but I think we should go home if we were.'

'Well, and so should I,' said her new friend, 'if the house were fit to receive us; but it is being newly papered and painted, and so we may as well continue to *do* Switzerland now we are here.'

A few more words passed, and then Mr. Lancaster told Helen she had better go to bed, as he knew she would be awakened very early in the morning, as is always the case in a hotel at Chamounix, where the world seems to begin so much earlier than anywhere else.

When Helen came down to breakfast the following day, she learnt from her father that her new acquaintance was called Mr. Arden, and that he and his daughters were also going to the Mer de Glâce that morning.

As he spoke, Mr. Arden entered the room and sat down to breakfast at the same table. After some time the two girls appeared, Julia's face bearing signs of recent tears, and Di looking as if her temper had been rather severely tried. 'Come, girls,' called out their father, 'how late you are! It's time we were off.'

Both made some slight reply, and sat down to breakfast ; but Julia had hardly tasted anything before she commenced grumbling at the coffee, eggs, etc., declaring there was nothing fit to eat.

‘Well, come, we all share alike,’ said Mr. Arden somewhat impatiently. ‘You don’t hear others complaining—do be more sensible ;’ which speech stopped Miss Julia’s complaints for the time being ; but, as Helen afterwards discovered, she was possessed with that miserable failing—discontent, and nothing ever pleased or satisfied her for any length of time. Her sister, if somewhat more hoydenish, was a far more genuine character. She did not care for the beauties of nature or for any intellectual pursuits, but she was honest and open as the day, cheerful and energetic, and altogether far from being a disagreeable travelling companion, for she made the best of things ; and, although heartily wishing herself at home again, did not give way to useless complaints or fancies, as Julia did.

Mules were ordered for Miss Arden and the two gentlemen, Helen and Diana preferring to walk. Julia fancied herself unequal to the exertion ; but riding could have been little pleasure

to her, for every time the mule approached the edge of the path, as they rode up the mountain, she screamed with terror, declaring it would fall over the precipice, and that she should be killed.

‘Nonsense, Ju,’ said her sister, who was walking by her side—the two gentlemen were on in front. ‘Why, the guide never leaves go of the rein. There’s nothing to be afraid of.’

‘But I’ve got such a vicious mule, look how he puts up his ears every now and then. If papa or Mr. Lancaster would change with me, I wouldn’t mind. It wouldn’t take a minute to shift the saddles.’

‘Nonsense,’ said her sister again. ‘I am sure papa won’t let you do any such thing. Besides, why should they ride a vicious animal any more than you?’ It’s very kind of you to wish it, I must say!’

‘They wouldn’t be frightened, and I am,’ persisted Julia.

‘You’ve no need to be; has she?’ asked Diana, turning to the guide and speaking in French.

‘No, mademoiselle need feel no fear,’ he replied in the same language, his mule was thoroughly

to be trusted ; and then he began telling them anecdotes of her sagacity and good disposition, which, for a little while, diverted Julia's attention from herself. Afterwards (for when once these guides begin to speak they rarely stop) he gave them a description of a terrible fire which had taken place at Chamounix a year or two previously, breaking off in his narrative every now and then to pick a flower for Helen, whose hands were already full of similar treasures. He described the wild confusion and terror which reigned through the valley during the fire ; how some thought of their aged parents, wives, or children, others of their mules or cows, and many only of themselves. He drew a dreadful picture of the sufferings of those poor animals, which, shut up in their sheds, were unable to escape, and were half or quite burnt to death before assistance could be given them.

Helen and Diana were really interested in the recital, but Julia grew very weary of it, and at length refused to listen any longer to 'more horrors.' 'Ah ! tout cela m'ennuie,' she said in her very indifferent French. 'J'aurai les vapeurs. Parlons de quelque chose plus gai.'

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Jacques, that was the guide's name, replied that mademoiselle was perfectly right ; what was the use of talking of dismal things ? Had he not thought ' les Anglaises ' only cared for what was melancholy, he should not have spoken of the fire, and so on. And then to change the subject, he began telling them of his own exploits as a chamois hunter ; wonderful stories of impossible feats and hair-breadth escapes, which interested Di beyond measure, far more than the beautiful scenery through which they were passing. Jacques told her many curious facts about the chamois ; one was the way in which they are protected from danger by their wonderful sense of smell, sight, and hearing. When they are collected into a herd, an old doe places herself at the head of it, and undertakes to warn the others of all threatened dangers. Accordingly, they play or feed without thought or care, feeling implicit confidence in their guardian, who grazes a short distance off, peering about carefully every now and then, and sniffing in all directions. Presently, scenting something suspicious, she gives a shrill whistle ; hearing which, the stragglers instantly assemble and remain

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motionless, every eye, ear, and nose turned in the suspected direction. Another whistle, and off she bounds, followed by the rest, springing from rock to rock, over wide chasms, alighting safely with their four feet all together on landing places so small as scarcely to afford room for even their tiny hoofs. Up and down the apparently impassable precipices they go, never resting until they are safe among the rocky pinnacles, where only a bird could follow them.

‘How I should like to have a tame one,’ said Helen.

‘Ah, mademoiselle,’ said Jacques, ‘they are too timid to tame. If they were less so, and could be domesticated, they would be as useful as the goat, and—’

‘Just as stupid,’ broke in Di. ‘They are much better fun as they are, wild and clever, sleeping in glaciers, and all that kind of thing.’

‘Very cold and uncomfortable beds, I should think,’ said Julia, languidly.

‘Can’t you tell us any adventure you have had out chamois hunting?’ asked Di.

‘A hundred, mademoiselle, if you like,’ said Jacques, smiling. ‘I will tell you one which

happened many years ago, when I was very young, and would have passed days and days in the mountains, merely on the chance of shooting a chamois. One morning, after walking for several hours without getting a shot at the shy creatures, I suddenly came upon a small herd on the Col de Géant ; before I well saw them, off they went, but I followed, judging they would make for a point not far distant, and after a great deal of clambering, reached a rock from behind which I could get a quiet view of the neighbourhood where I expected to find them. Peeping round, imagine my delight on seeing a fine chamois standing well out against the sky on the top of a high pinnacle, and within easy shooting distance.'

'The guardian, I suppose,' put in Di, greatly interested.

'Resting my rifle cautiously,' continued Jacques, 'I fired, only just in time, for the animal had already scented danger, and before I could pull the trigger made a movement of alarm ; my bullet, however, stopped his whistle, and he fell dead in his bound. Running across the small plateau between the rocks, I soon found



that although I had killed my little friend, I had a good deal more to do before I could bag him, for the pinnacle on the top of which he lay, rose perpendicular and smooth as a wall some eighty feet above me, while on the other side it overhung a frightful chasm which bounded the plateau where I stood. For a long time I could see no possible way to climb it: it was difficult to imagine how even a chamois had managed it; but going a little distance off, I saw that, by descending a short way, I could reach a point where some small cracks on the side over the precipice slanted upwards, leading to and nearly reaching a rougher portion of the rock. Accordingly, laying aside everything I carried, I made the attempt. The clefts were so narrow in many places as barely to admit the tips of my toes. It was better for the hands of course, I could see where to put them, and could get them further in, and a good cragsman is safe enough when he can get hold up to the first joints of his fingers. So I sidled along slowly but safely, until stopped by a smooth piece of rock which bulged out, though just beyond it was a nice hold for the hand

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and another for the foot. But could I reach them? *Ces demoiselles* must understand that I was standing with my face as it were against a wall, and that the place I wished to gain was on my right, and rather higher than the projecting rock. Getting a firm hold with my left hand and foot, I made a spring round, my right foot reached its place; but the projection catching my chest, I only just touched the rock with the points of my fingers, and missing my hold, swung back like the pendule of a clock. Though the whole did not occupy more than a second or two of time, I can well remember each incident of that swing; the useless struggle of my right foot to keep its new place; the sensation of falling back; the certainty that my left foot must go too; the convulsive attempt to prevent it; how it gradually twisted off, leaving me swinging by my left hand only. Would that, my last chance, keep its hold? I was yet in motion, and could feel my fingers sliding round gradually, till at length the fore-finger went, and I hung over a precipice perhaps 300 feet deep, with my back nearly turned to the rock, my arm partially twisted, and supported by three fingers only! Happily my body turned no

farther, and in less time than it takes me to tell it, I recovered myself, and was comparatively safe again; that is, in the same position as before I took my unsuccessful spring—'

'What a wonderful escape!' said Helen.

'When *will* the man leave off talking?' sighed Julia.

'Oh, do go on, what did you do then?' cried Diana eagerly, immensely interested in the recital.

'*Bien!* what was to be done next? To think of going back was not pleasant, so I determined to try again, having only missed before by an inch. So I contrived to get a little nearer, and thinking more of my hand than my foot, just managed to get hold enough to keep my position, which *ces demoiselles* will understand was that of the Austrian eagle painted on a wall. It was a dangerous moment, as I gradually eased off the grasp of my left hand, and increased that of my right; for you have little support with your arms nearly horizontal and extended, and one small slip of the fingers would have made it all over with me. However I succeeded, and was soon safely by the side of my chamois, not perhaps feeling

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quite so much interest in him as I did before my climb. First, I had been desirous to kill my chamois ; then, having killed him, more desirous to get him home ; but now, *mille fanfares !* I was most desirous to know how on earth I was to get either him or myself home ! I did not at all like the idea of returning by the way I had come ; it would scarcely have been possible at any time, for descending is more difficult than ascending, and then I was fatigued ; and although I had not noticed it before, I felt that my left wrist had suffered a slight *entorse*. To say the least of it, the position was *tant soit peu embêtant*. There was a brute of a lammergeyr that would keep hovering and screaming round me, probably attracted by my game ; but the feeling would arise that perhaps he might have a pick at my bones too before long. However, there's never any good in giving up, so I took a pull at my flask of kirchwasser, and said a prayer, which seemed somehow or other to make me all right again, and then set about to see if I couldn't find a better road to return by. As long as I looked down, I could see none but the bad one by which I had come. I never thought of looking *up*, till

the lammergeyr perched on a pile of stones on the top of a little peak not far from the rock I was on, though some feet higher, and joined to it by a narrow strip, almost as sharp at the top as the edge of a knife. Directly I set eyes on those stones I knew they were piled one on the other too regularly for accident. A man had evidently been up there, and must have come down again, or I should have heard of it; and if one man, why not another? I was soon astride the edge, and scrambling up, found not only that I was right about the stones, they being piled in crossed layers, but, to my joy, that by dropping about ten feet on to a ledge on the side furthest from the plateau, I should reach a way, which, though bad enough, was easy compared with the other. So tumbling my chamois down on the snow, I soon joined him, and in due time we arrived safe and sound at Chamounix.'

'And I only wish I had been with you,' said Di, as she thanked him for the story. 'What glorious fun!'

'I can't say I should have liked it,' said Helen; and she asked Jacques if he hadn't been very much frightened.

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‘Ah ! mademoiselle, if I had been I shouldn’t be here now to tell it. *Le bon Dieu* is very good to us, and never lets fear come till the danger is over.’

‘But didn’t this adventure make you determine not to climb such dreadful places again ?’

‘Oh no,’ replied Jacques. ‘I have been a hundred times in such bad plights since, and as ready as ever to venture again the next day.’

‘But why risk so much for a chamois ? Is the meat or skin very valuable ?’

‘No, mademoiselle, it is for the glory of killing it ; and also there is great pleasure and excitement in climbing up as high as it is possible to go. Do not your compatriots come here, year after year, and spend their money, and often lose their lives, with no object but to be able to say they have been at the top of mountains that are difficult to ascend.’

‘And quite right too !’ exclaimed Di ; ‘and if I had my own way, I would go up every one of them. How I wish papa would let me try Mont Blanc ! I’m sure I could manage it.’

‘Oh dear, when shall we be at the top of this wearisome mountain,’ sighed Julia.

‘How can you call it so!’ cried Helen, almost indignantly. ‘It *is* so lovely. Just look at that beautiful peak now in sight,’ pointing to the Aiguille Dru, a gigantic snow-capped peak, rising in matchless beauty above the dark green pine tops of the forest. I thought I had heard there was a little eyelet hole pierced in one of its crags,’ she said, turning to the guide, who replied that mademoiselle was mistaken, the little hole was in one of the crags of the Aiguille du Midi, a peak nearer Mont Blanc. ‘I will show it you from the valley as we return; although 7000 feet above the valley, you can distinctly see it; first white and then blue, as the clouds flit past behind it.’

‘Well this,’ remarked Di, ‘is something like a mountain; awful stunning, as Reggy would say.’

‘My dear Di,’ remonstrated her father, who, having stopped to admire the view, was within earshot of her remark, ‘pray don’t let me hear you make use of such a slang expression again.’

‘Oh, papa, I beg your pardon. I forgot you could hear me. You see I learnt it of Reggy last holidays; he was always calling this and that aw—oh, I forgot, well what I called that moun-

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tain just now, begging its pardon, and as I was always with him no wonder I caught the complaint; besides,' lowering her voice, and going closer to her father, 'it is such fun shocking Julia; the look she puts on at my vulgarity is perfectly killing. Look at her now, she won't get over that obnoxious expression for hours!'

'And quite right too,' said Mr. Arden gravely. 'We often laugh at Julia for affectation, but that is no reason why you should run into the other extreme, Di. Whatever you do, avoid becoming either a vulgar hoyden, or, worse still, a fast young lady of the nineteenth century.'

'Dear old daddy, don't be too hard on me. After all, I was only quoting Reggy; but I'll try and mend my words and ways.'

'Do, darling; and Di, you said just now it was such fun to shock Julia, now don't you think that if you were not quite so teasing things would go on more smoothly? What caused her red eyes this morning, eh?'

'Oh, papa, she was so discontented and silly with Jane about some rubbish or other, I tried to tease her out of it, and the result was, of course,



a flood of tears. I daresay it was half my fault, but really she's very trying.'

'And Miss Di smoothes her down, schoolboy fashion, I expect; rubs her back up the wrong way, eh?'

'Sometimes, I'm afraid,' admitted Diana. 'But you are not to lecture me any more now. I wish I could be a good steady girl, like little Helen here. Will you exchange with Mr. Lancaster, papa? What would he do with poor me after that dear little quiet mouse?'

'I don't think I'll exchange my naughty wild colt,' said Mr. Arden, pinching her cheek as she leant up against the mule. 'Not just yet, at all events. Why, how we have outstripped the others, Di! Let us wait a little while for them. Here comes Helen, with her hands full of flowers, as happy as a queen. Why don't you care for them too, you insensible child? Why, Miss Lancaster,' he went on, without waiting for an answer which Di would have been puzzled to have given, 'what treasures you have got, and how prettily you have arranged them!'

They were beautiful, certainly; even Di could not help admiring the ruby-coloured Alpine roses,

deep blue gentians, bright yellow auriculas, and the delicate pink and white saxifrages, which Helen had grouped together with great taste.

‘I am afraid they will all die before I reach home,’ said the latter, regretfully; ‘the Alpine roses are already fading. Jacques says that although they will let nature do what she likes with them, they droop directly at the touch of a human hand.’

They had now reached the top of the Montanvert, and immediately below them was the wonderful Mer de Glâce, that frozen sea of ice, one of the most striking scenes in Switzerland. After looking at it for some time from above, Hèlen and Di begged to be allowed to descend, and walk a little way on it, which at length, after many injunctions to be careful, they were allowed to do under Jacques’ guidance; each being first provided with a pair of woollen socks to draw over their boots, so that there would be less danger of their slipping about. It was nothing new to Diana to walk upon ice, for she was a very good skater, but it was quite a new sensation to Helen. She was astonished and greatly delighted to find how pure and white the glacier

was when seen quite close ; it was like a scene of enchantment to stand between the white blocks of crystal, looking down into the intense blue of the numerous crevasses, at the bottom of some of which, when the eye became accustomed to the colour, could be seen fairy rills of clear water.

‘ This *is* nice,’ said Di ; ‘ I should like to stop here for ages. It’s quite the jolliest thing I’ve seen in Switzerland.’


Helen’s admiration was as deep, if less outspoken ; and it was some time before either of them could tear themselves away and rejoin the rest of the party, who were anxiously watching them from above.





## CHAPTER XII.

### A DISCOVERY.

OW the next morning was spent may be learnt from Helen's diary, a few pages of which we will take the liberty of reading.

*'Chamounix, July 20, 1853.*—Too wet this morning to make any excursion, which was tiresome, as papa and I were to have seen the Cascade du Dent. The time, however, passed very quickly, for papa told me a great deal which was very interesting about glaciers. As I don't want to forget it, I will write it all down here. Papa asked me if I knew how glaciers were formed. I said no; and then he told me that they were formed from the snow which has fallen on the high mountains during the greater part of the

year, melting with the heat of the summer sun, and slowly falling off the heights, accumulating and congealing as it goes, until by the force of its own weight it is gradually carried downwards into the villages below, destroying all vegetation on its way, even large fir-trees, and very often crushing huge rocks. This accounts for the uneven surface and fantastic shapes of the glacier. The dirty-looking stuff at each side of it is called *the moraine*, and is composed of the pieces of earth and rock which fall from the neighbouring mountains during its descent, and are received on its edges. But the most extraordinary thing is that these ice-fields (I like this name for them) are perpetually moving. Papa said that some people gave one reason for this, some another, but that a very clever man, Professor Forbes, says it is because the ice of which they are formed has more water in it than common ice has, and is in consequence much more flexible. Of course, the underneath portion, close to the ground, is much warmer than the surface, and naturally dissolves. This is also the case with the lower part of the glacier nearest to the valley; and here may always be seen pools and little rills of water. The cre-

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vasses or rents in the glacier are very dangerous. Sometimes they are so wide that it is almost impossible to spring over them, and very often the sun and wind cause them to split still wider. Sometimes they are hidden by a coating of snow, through which unfortunate people have been known to slip and perish. Papa told me a sad story of a friend of his who lost his life on a glacier. He would go out after a heavy snow-storm in spite of the guide's remonstrances. Returning late, when it was getting dusk, he fell into one of these crevasses, the opening being hidden by the freshly-fallen snow. Of course the guide could do nothing without assistance. He was suspected by some of having murdered the poor gentleman, but no one thought so any longer, when at length the body of the latter was drawn out of the ice, and his watch and purse found upon him. I asked papa what was the use of glaciers, and he said they were of great use, for when all other sources of water were dried up by the summer heat, they, on the contrary, are melted by it, and are able to feed the mountain torrents, and the rivers and lakes, so that vegetation is prevented from being parched

up and killed. Sometimes a large piece of rock falls upon the ice, and becomes what is called a "glacier table," for the sun's rays being unable to penetrate to the ice on which it rests, can only melt the surrounding portion, so that in time the rock is supported on a pedestal some feet high, and gives the appearance of a huge mushroom on a stalk.'

Just as she had finished writing the above, Helen received a visit from Diana Arden, who said that Julia had sent her with a message to ask her kindly to bring her sketches to their room, as, having nothing to do, she would like to look over them.

'You won't mind, will you?' asked Di. 'It will really be a charitable action, for poor Ju is terribly bored, and that unfortunate Jane will have to go on brushing her hair till dinner-time, unless the weather should clear, or she can find some amusement.'

'Brushing her hair!' repeated Helen. 'What do you mean?'

'Oh, I forgot, you don't know Julia yet. Why, it's a fancy of hers to have her hair brushed whenever she has nothing to do, or when any-

thing has put her out. She says it soothes her ; at any rate it keeps her quiet.'

'Well, let us go to her,' said Helen, taking up her portfolio.

She could not but acknowledge that Miss Arden in her white dressing-gown, with all her long wavy hair floating over it, was a pretty picture to look upon.

'What beautiful hair !' she exclaimed involuntarily ; at which Julia smiled complacently, well contented to be admired.

'You good little thing !' she said in a patronizing way, 'to come and enliven me. Bring the portfolio nearer ; there, that's right, now I can look at the sketches without moving.'

'Really, Ju,' burst out her sister, 'you are too absurd. Why do you give yourself all those airs and graces ? Why shouldn't you move, or walk, or dance, or jump, or—or—'

'There, that's enough, Diana, you needn't be so violent ; and pray allow me to say what I like. You may be as strong as a cart-horse, but I am not ; and I never heard that there was any sin in feeling tired and unequal to much exertion.'

'Stuff and nonsense,' muttered Di. 'You



are only very affected,' was on her lips to say, but, seeing how uncomfortable Helen looked, and remembering her father's caution, she repressed the words, saying something about one of the sketches instead.

'How very well you draw, Miss Lancaster! I never could have supposed that you had done these. You must have been taught very young?'

'Yes. I was always very fond of drawing, and can scarcely remember the time when I hadn't a pencil in my hand. Papa used to paint beautifully when he was younger.'

'How pretty this sketch of Lucerne is, and what lovely ones of Basle! I suppose you were a long time there, as you have so many of it?'

'Yes, we were there some days on papa's account, you know. He fell down the first day we arrived, and sprained his ankle.'

'Wasn't it very dull for you?' asked Julia. 'Or had you any friends there?'

'We made some,' replied Helen. 'The chaplain and his wife and sister were most kind to me, and I was very fond of their two dear little girls.'

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My great friend, however, was Miss Rivers, she—'

'Oh, Jane,' interrupted Julia crossly, 'you are pulling my hair so, do take care; how clumsy you are!'

'I beg your pardon, Miss,' said the maid; and, looking up, Helen was struck by the deep flush on her usually pale face.

Diana also chanced to see it, and, thinking the poor woman was tired with standing so long, said kindly, 'I am sure Jane is tired, Julia. Let me brush your hair now.'

'Oh no, thank you, Miss Diana,' said the maid eagerly, 'I am not at all tired!'

'Well, tell me when you are,' said the other; and, turning to Helen, she went on, 'What kind of people were these Rivers at Basle? I wonder whether they were related to some cousins of ours. I've heard them mention that they had relations of that name living in Switzerland.'

And then Helen suddenly remembered that Miss Rivers had called the cousin with whom she used to live, Mrs. Arden.

'I think they must have been the same,' she replied. 'Miss Rivers once talked to me about

a cousin of hers of your name, who had lost a little boy.'

'Oh yes, that was poor Cissy. She lost her little boy about two years ago. I remember that there was a Miss Rivers living with her at the time. I never saw her, for I was always at school then, but I used to hear about her; and, don't you remember, Julia, that she left them just afterwards, and has lived abroad ever since?'

'Yes, I think I do recollect something about it,' replied Julia, languidly; 'but Jane will give you all the particulars. She was the child's nurse, and—'

'Oh, Miss Julia, don't; please don't ask me about it. I can't bear to talk of it, indeed I can't;' and Jane, bursting into a flood of tears, put down the brush, and hastened from the room.

Helen was too much astonished at discovering that this was the same servant Miss Rivers had mentioned, to say a single word.

Julia looked very much annoyed, and Diana felt really sorry for having inadvertently hurt the poor woman's feelings. 'Why didn't you

give me a hint, Julia, when I was talking about the child? I had no idea Jane had been his nurse—you know I was at school when she was engaged—of course she felt his death dreadfully.'

'Oh dear,' yawned Julia, 'what a fuss about nothing! Why, it happened two years ago. I should have thought the girl would have forgotten the child by this time. How ridiculous of her to go off crying like that!'

'Oh!' said Helen, 'I think it is only natural. She was his nurse, and he must have been such a dear little fellow; I am sure I don't wonder at her crying. I wish we hadn't spoken of him;' but Helen ceased to wish this a few days later, as you will see.

'Why did Jane leave Cissy's service?' asked Diana.

'It was her own wish to do so, I believe. She didn't want to undertake the charge of another baby.'

'Has she been with you long?' asked Helen.

'No, she came only a few weeks before we left home. And now let us finish looking at your drawings, for it will soon be time to dress for

dinner, and as yet we have only seen half of them.'

After dinner the rain ceased, and Mont Blanc emerged, radiant and smiling, from the bank of clouds it had been hiding in the whole day. The girls and Mr. Arden were sitting watching it from the little summer-house in the garden belonging to the hotel, all having professed themselves too tired, from the wet day, to join Mr. Lancaster in his evening walk.

'How nice it would be to go to the top!' sighed Diana, looking at the mountain with longing eyes. 'Oh, papa, having done it yourself, you oughtn't to be so cruel as not to let me try!'

'Have you *really* been up Mont Blanc?' asked Helen, looking somewhat doubtfully at Mr. Arden's portly figure.

'Yes, I really have,' he replied, laughing. 'That's just the way with you young people. You can never fancy that we old fellows were ever young and active, and all the rest of it. Yes, Miss Helen, I may be fat and short-winded now, but this head has been as high as any in Europe.'

‘Oh! do tell us about it,’ exclaimed the girls in chorus.

Mr. Arden gave a deep sigh, and threw himself back in his chair.

‘Oh! what have I let myself in for, and on such a hot evening too! You dreadful children, do let me off!’

‘No, no,’ said Di; ‘we won’t indeed. You won’t let me be a heroine, and so you must tell us how you became a hero.’

‘But I never said I had been one,’ protested her father.

‘Oh, but every one was who ascended Mont Blanc so many years ago; so be good, papa, and resign yourself to your fate. Now, then, I’ll make a beginning for you. Some fifty years ago —’

‘No, no, I declare it’s not more than forty,’ interposed Mr. Arden; ‘you naughty child, to want to make me out such an old fellow!’

‘Well, some forty years ago, then, you were travelling for the improvement of your mind, we’ll suppose. Making the grand tour, which was the proper thing to do in those days, and you

one day found yourself, as you do now, in this very valley of Chamounix —'

'With no saucy, overgrown daughter to plague me,' put in Mr. Arden, *sotto voce*.

'Now, papa, after that I won't help you any more, you may go on yourself.'

'Well, then,' said Mr. Arden, seeing that resistance was useless, and warming to his work as he went on, 'as you say, I found myself in this very place, and most likely at this very hotel. I remember one evening seeing a small crowd of rough, wiry, and not very clean-looking individuals of the mountain type assembled in the court-yard, discussing Alpenstocks, knapsacks, thick shoes, woollen socks, wine, and apparently Moses Primrose's gross of green spectacles. A good-looking man, a gentleman, and evidently a foreigner, appeared to be the head of the party, which consisted of a dozen guides and porters, with a number of friends engaged in assisting to pack innumerable knapsacks with innumerable contents. It was the Cavaliere Barelli, I was told, who was about to ascend the Alpine giant. Had he no companion? I asked. They told me that good old Gaspard Caux, then curé of

Chamounix, had taken it into his head that he would like to trot up also, to pray for his children on the mountain top. Every one was talking about the ascent. Every one whispered and pointed at the distinguished foreigner. Even the very guides were heroes, for in those days the ascent was considered really a great feat. How I should like to be going with them was my inward thought! and after a few words with the innkeeper, I approached the cavalier, hat in hand, and in my choicest French petitioned to be allowed to accompany him. A moment after, with a loud cheer, it was announced that three more guides were wanted; then followed a general shaking of hands with everybody—tourists, guides, and villagers. Some anxiety was felt about the ascent, as no one had been up Mont Blanc for a long time, and from the continual changes of the glaciers unusual difficulties were anticipated. I never slept that night, which was not a good preparation; but nevertheless next morning found me, from excitement, quite fresh and ready.

‘The whole population turned out to see us off, some crying, some praying; a great number accompanied us a good distance, full of anxiety



to help us on our way, carrying everything they could, and willing, I believe, to have carried us also. The first part of the ascent was very warm work, but not difficult. I remember suffering from intense thirst, and admiring the Alpine roses or rhododendrons very much in consequence.'

'But why? for what reason?' asked Helen.

'Because, according to the advice of one of the guides, I chewed the stems, which made me much less thirsty.

'After a little the path became much more exciting, it skirted along the face of a rock, and was often so narrow that we had to walk sideways in order not to tumble into a precipice some hundred feet deep. Then we came to the moraine on the edge of the Glacier de Bossons, a channel filled with round lumps of stone and *débris* of all sorts. The ascent here was very tedious and fatiguing, scrambling over the large loose stones, and toiling through the masses of gravel. At last we reached the Pierre de l'Echelle, a large rock, in a hollow of which a ladder is kept to assist in crossing the glacier, and here we halted to refresh ourselves from the contents of our knapsacks. The few volunteers who had accompanied us so far now

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left us, and we started clear of all hangers-on except some porters whom we had hired to carry our packs some way farther. The real dangers of the ascent did not begin until we had reached the glacier; but the beauty of the scene was compensation enough for almost any amount of danger or fatigue. You thought the Mer de Glâce beautiful, and so it is; but the upper portion of the Glacier de Bossons may be termed wildly magnificent. Cliffs and pinnacles of ice rise in the most fantastic forms among crevices, some mere cracks narrow enough to jump over, others yawning chasms of apparently immeasurable depth; some impassable, some spanned by natural bridges of ice or snow; here a cavern with gigantic icicles hanging from the roof; there a wall of semi-transparent pale green ice pierced with windows, like a ruined castle, with wreaths of snow hanging ivy-like from its top.'

'How beautiful!' said Helen; 'I wish we could see all this.'

'Didn't you have any adventure here?' asked Diana, impatiently.

'We had to cross a great many difficult crevasses. One of our bridges was a huge block of

ice, with upright glassy sides some twenty feet high, which lay across a very wide and deep chasm. You will be surprised when I tell you that we did not climb over it, but walked on one of its perpendicular faces like flies on a pane of glass.'

'How could that be done?' asked Helen.

'A guide went first, and, holding by one hand, cut holes in the ice with his axe, passing from one to the other as he made it, till he reached the other side. Nothing in the whole ascent made me feel so nervous as seeing him perform this almost incredible feat, though it was bad enough to follow in his slippery steps, hanging by our fingers and toes over the fearful abyss. There was, of course, much real danger here, for if one of the party had made a false step, several more must have been dragged to the bottom with him, as we were all tied together. We crossed another place in almost as singular a manner. A spire of ice stood in the middle of the crevasse, its head some feet below the level on which we were. The ladder was let down to this, and held as steady as we could while a guide descended. After chopping hollows to make the


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foothold safer, he lifted the ladder, and, placing it over to the other side of the crevasse, mounted. But as it was not long enough to reach the top by some feet, he had to complete the ascent by holes which he cut in the ice cliff. We all followed, the ladder being drawn back by a rope for the next comer as each crossed. The head of the pinnacle not being more than a yard in diameter, and very slippery, it required some nerve to stand and shift the ladder. Looking down, the bottom was lost in the blue green depths, and we could hear bits of ice which were thrown down go pat, pat, pat several times, as they bounded from side to side before reaching the bottom. Towards sunset, we reached our halting place for the night, on the Grand Mulets, which are small conical rocks standing near the top of the glacier. Our nest for the night was a small ledge about 200 or 300 feet above the glacier on the lower side. A low wall of rough stones had been piled up by former parties to prevent uneasy sleepers rolling over the precipice. The view was splendid; below lay Chamounix, with its mountains and glaciers; behind it the Breven; and far away shone the Lake of Geneva, with

the Jura Mountains in the distance. The whole scene was rosy from the setting sun. We had a grand supper of cold chickens, washed down by all sorts of wine from *vin ordinaire*, through every saint of the Bordeaux vineyards to Champagne. The guides became very jolly in consequence, and amused themselves by singing songs, and racing the empty bottles, throwing them down the slopes of the glacier, backing one against the other for speed, and watching the race with as much excitement as if they had large sums of money depending on it. The event closed with a prayer and thanksgiving for our safety thus far. The good old *curé* officiated, and all joined with the greatest devotion. Then we retired into our sleeping-place, under an awning made of a sheet laid over two or three Alpine batons. At first, only eight or ten persons lay down, and I thought we should do very well, though packed as close as herrings in a barrel, in a space hardly large enough for half our number ; but just as I was in my first sleep, some five or six more guides squeezed in, disturbed our packing, and one moving and another moving, I found myself at last with the *curé* across my chest and

three guides across my legs, so I wriggled out of my uncomfortable position as fast as I could, and passed the rest of the night nodding over the fire. There was something indescribably solemn in the dead silence all around, broken only by the heavy roar of the avalanches which fell from time to time in various directions. The night was perfectly calm, not a cloud or breath of wind, and the stars shone brightly in an almost purple sky. We left the rock at about two o'clock in the morning, marching by the light of lanterns carried by the guides. The sun rose as we were ascending the steep incline of snow which leads to the Grand Plateau. There was nothing particularly interesting thus far. It was cold, and I was sleepy. Sometimes we crossed crevassés, as on the Glacier de Bossons, but generally it was a dull, heavy, monotonous track over softish snow, or a still more tiring ascent over steep slopes. Except a muttered word now and then from the leading guide, no one spoke. As the sun rose we brightened up, and moved with more life as the guides hurried us on in some parts of the Grand Plateau from fear of avalanches. We skirted along the edge of a frightful crevasse,

where, some twenty years previously, three guides had been lost, all of whom had relations in our party. Farther on we were stopped by another almost as large, but at last contrived to cross it by means of our batons and the remains of an old snow bridge; that is, two lumps of congealed snow which stuck on the opposite edges of the crevasse, nearly meeting each other. Two of the guides left us at this point, refusing to go any farther. Thence we went on to the foot of the Rochers Rouges, where, in shelter and safe from the danger of avalanches, we halted for a few minutes. I say in shelter, because the wind was now blowing fresh, and peppering us with ice-dust, which, whipping against our faces, was by no means agreeable. On we went, now up steep slopes of ice, in which every step had to be cut by the axe, now over a flat or undulating plateau, and so on past the Rochers Rouges and the Last Rocks, from which we broke off fragments as trophies for our friends below. The Mur de la Côte, perhaps the most frightful portion of the ascent, was passed in safety. Imagine a slope of ice much steeper than the steepest church roof, and some 400 feet high, at the bottom of which,



in place of the church wall, you have an abyss of unknown depth. Fancy yourself climbing on that icy roof for more than half an hour, with a cutting wind driving the sharp bits of ice into your face, yourself already fatigued from past exertions, and suffering from the rarefaction of the air, and you will form a tolerable idea of how we were on the Mur de la Côte. One man let slip his Alpenstock, and in one moment it had whirled down the slope we had been so long in ascending, and fallen into the chasm below; and one false step would, we knew, make the same short work of us. Well, I'm getting very tired, and I think you must be the same, and it's getting cold, and we ought all to be indoors, so I'll make short work of the rest. At length we reached the summit, and I know the proper thing to say would be that the wonderful view quite repaid us for our fatigue, etc., etc. But, alas! we could see little or nothing for the dense cloud of sleet in our faces; the storm grew thicker and thicker, and, by the guide's advice, we hastened to descend as quickly as possible; this was much quicker work than ascending, for we slid down slopes in a few



minutes which had taken us hours to climb. The usual way of doing this is for the whole party to sit in a line, one behind the other, changing directions, or stopping, when necessary, by means of the Alpenstock, which, plunged in the snow, serves as a drag. So screaming, laughing, tumbling, we slid down, sometimes to within a few yards of a crevasse, then pulled up short, and walked to where we could cross it. Coming down was a very different affair altogether from going up. The ascent seemed a serious undertaking, besides the fatigue; the descent was simply very good fun; we had done our work, and had found out that it was not so very serious after all. The only adventures we had were running away from avalanches on the plateau; once we got under a ledge of rock just in time for one of considerable size to bound over us. This was the only one that came at all near us during the journey. As we approached Chamounix crowds of people met us, and, as we entered the town, some of them insisted on carrying us in triumph, and looking upon us in the light of heroes. At the hotel, also, we were made lions of by the ladies, who treasured up most

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gratefully the bits of the "last rocks" that we had brought them. So many pieces was I asked for that at last I had to procure a fresh supply from a guide, who doubtless procured it from the nearest roadside. And now we must all come in, for it's nearly bedtime. Here's Mr. Lancaster coming to look for us. Ah, young ladies, you won't get me to spin such a long yarn again in a hurry, I can tell you !'

'I am afraid I shan't have the chance,' said Helen, 'as you go away to-morrow. Thank you very much for telling us this one.'





## CHAPTER XIII.

### JANE'S CONFESSION.

**N**EXT morning the Ardens started at an early hour for Martigny, having arranged to go thither by the beautiful pass called the *Tête Noire*. The Lancasters intended following the same route the day after, but as they meant to sleep at the little inn on the top of the pass, and the others were going straight on, they did not expect to meet again. Helen and her father had a lovely day for the expedition, and thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful scenery through which they passed. On emerging from the arched passage, cut actually through the rocks, a few yards from where the little inn stands, what was their astonishment to see Diana Arden running to meet them.

‘What! you have stopped here after all then?’

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exclaimed Helen. 'I thought you were so anxious to get on.'

'Oh, such a sad thing has happened! Poor Jane has broken her arm. The mule she was riding began to kick violently, just as we arrived here yesterday, and threw her off on to her left arm. We sent to Martigny instantly for a doctor, but he was out at the time, and did not get over here until this morning. He has set her arm, and says she mustn't think of moving for three or four days at least; he thinks she may then be carried as far as Martigny carefully in a *chaise à porteurs*. So as we can't leave the poor thing alone, here we are in this wretched little hole of an inn for that time.'

'Poor Jane!' said Helen, 'I am so sorry for her. What dreadful pain she must have suffered, and will still suffer, I should think! I am very sorry for you all as well, as I know how anxious you were to get nearer home.'

'Yes,' said Di, dejectedly. 'It's a great bore, and the worst of it is that Julia is so cross. What we shall do with her all the time I can't imagine. If she found Chamounix dull, what will she find this place, where the only book is the very greasy one in which the travellers' names are entered?'

‘Let us hope that she will make the best of it with poor Jane so ill,’ said Mr. Lancaster, who was inclined to think Diana somewhat hard on her sister. On arriving at the inn, however, he was obliged to confess that he was mistaken, for Julia’s grumblings and lamentations on her own account were loud and unceasing. Had she been younger, or an older acquaintance, Mr. Lancaster would have spoken to her about her selfishness ; as it was, he did the best he could for Mr. Arden and Diana’s comfort, by proposing that Julia should accompany Helen and himself to Thun, whither they intended travelling by way of the Gemmi Pass. ‘You are going to Vevay,’ he added, ‘and it would be easy enough for Miss Arden to join you there by the diligence.’

Julia was delighted at the proposal, Mr. Arden and Diana more relieved than they would have liked to have confessed, but poor Helen looked the picture of dismay.

‘Oh, papa!’ she exclaimed directly they were alone, almost with tears in her eyes, ‘how could you ask Julia to come with us?’

‘I am very sorry that you should be annoyed with her, my darling, but the discomfort will only

be for a few days. We are bound to help each other, you know, and I could see it would be the best thing to do for poor Arden and Diana. It will be miserable enough for them at this wretched little inn, without having to bear with Miss Julia's vagaries in the way of temper.'

'Yes, but, papa, it's Mr. Arden's fault, he shouldn't have spoilt her so dreadfully, and he shouldn't give way to her now like he does.'

'You are too young to judge others, Helen; and, besides, we have nothing to do with that part of the business; so put up with your crumpled rose-leaf, my child, and let us set a good example to Julia by making the best of our small miseries.'

'She isn't likely to think that it is a misery for us,' grumbled on Helen. 'I daresay she thinks we are the ones obliged—oh dear!'

'Poor Helen! how badly she is treated. What with Bella Lee and Julia Arden, I'm afraid she won't have had any pleasure in her trip abroad.'

'Now, papa, you are very unkind to laugh at me; but you don't know how disagreeable Julia is.'

'But I do know that my little girl is not

selfish, and that she won't make every one around her uncomfortable because she is afraid of being made so herself for a few days.'

'No, that she won't,' said Helen, recovering her good temper. 'Why, I should be as bad as Julia then. Give me a kiss, papa. There, I'm all right now.'

'Proof against all the fretful Julias in the world, eh? That's well, otherwise I should be in as bad a plight as poor Arden. It's a sad pity, certainly,' he added, *sotto voce*, 'that people will take the trouble to spoil their children.'

'How is Jane this evening?' asked Mr. Arden, when they separated for the night.

'Still in great pain,' answered Diana. 'I have just seen her and given her her medicine, and I hope she will soon go to sleep.'

Jane, however, was suffering more pain than Diana was aware of, and, in the middle of the night, Helen was awakened by loud moans and groans, which at first seemed to her to come from some one in the room. Somewhat startled, she sat up in bed to listen, and then discovered that the noise came from the adjoining room, which the poor woman occupied.

'What dreadful pain she must be in !' thought Helen ; ' I must see if I can do anything for her ;' and, having slipped on her dressing-gown, she opened the door quietly, so as not to disturb any one else, and entered Jane's room.

There was a night light burning, and she could see the poor woman sitting up in bed groaning with pain.

' I am afraid you are suffering very much,' said Helen, approaching the bed, and speaking in a soothing tone. ' Can I get you anything, Jane ?'

' No, Miss, I'm nearly mad with the pain. It will kill me ; I shall die, I know I shall,' and she looked up excitedly into Helen's face, who replied, ' Oh no, Jane ; you mustn't think that. People seldom die of broken arms, you know.'

' But mine was so long before it was set, and I feel so queer in my head ; and oh, I'm sure this pain will kill me !'

' Your head feels funny from your fall, and from all the pain you have had,' said Helen, trying to reassure her. ' Do try and lie down, and perhaps you might get a little sleep, which would be so good for you.'

' No, Miss,' moaned Jane. ' I couldn't sleep



with this burning pain. 'Don't leave me,' she entreated, 'I can't bear to be alone, I see all kinds of faces round me, and I'm so frightened.'

Helen began to be rather alarmed at her manner, it was so wild, and she seemed in such a feverish state. 'I won't leave you,' she said gently, 'unless you would like me to call Miss Diana or Mr. Arden.'

'No, no !' exclaimed Jane vehemently. 'Don't call them. Stay here, Miss Helen, please ; I want to tell you something.'

'Yes, I will stay, if you will promise to be quiet, and not excite yourself,' replied Helen, sitting down by her side. But Jane would talk.

'I want to tell you something, Miss Helen,' she repeated. 'I must tell you, for I have been lying here thinking how awful it would be to die, and no one know the truth.'

'The truth of what, Jane ?' asked Helen, again alarmed at her manner, and fearing she was wandering in her mind, but thinking it best to humour her by letting her speak.

'About little Arthur,' half whispered Jane. 'Did Miss Rivers tell you why he died ?'

'Yes.'

‘Poor thing! she fancies she made the mistake that night in the medicine, but she didn’t. It was my fault. I didn’t know she had put the right bottle on the table, I thought it was still Mrs. Arden’s cough mixture there, and I changed the bottles. I was half stupefied with want of rest at the time, it is true. When, next morning, I found out the mistake, I nearly dropped. Miss Rivers heard me cry out, but she thought she had made the mistake; and when I saw that, I didn’t undeceive her, and I let Mr. Arden think the same, for I was afraid to tell. I knew I should lose my place, and perhaps never get another, and so—’

‘Oh, Jane, Jane!’ cried out Helen, forgetting all caution in her indignation, ‘how could you be so wicked? If you only knew what poor Miss Rivers has suffered all this time.’

‘Oh, Miss Helen, I know now how wrong, how wicked, I have been; but I haven’t been happy, no, not a moment, I haven’t. Miss Helen, will you pray for me?’

‘Yes,’ said Helen, her heart beating very fast, but trying to speak quietly as she saw how feverish and excited Jane was becoming. ‘But

now I shall go away unless you will lie down and cease speaking. Drink some of this nice cool lemonade. To-morrow you shall tell me more, ——and talk to papa,' she was about to add, but stopped in time, as she remembered the idea might alarm the poor woman in her present state.

'But will you tell Miss Rivers; will you promise to write and tell her to-morrow, and ask her to forgive me?'

'Yes, indeed, I will,' said Helen earnestly, and after a great many more entreaties Jane was induced to lie down, and being quiet from sheer exhaustion, she at length, to Helen's great relief, obtained a little sleep, which, although short and troubled, was better than none at all. It was a weary watch for the little girl; but although she might easily have awakened Diana or Julia, who slept in the next room, or even have called Marjorie to take her place, she was too unselfish to do so, and she knew that Jane, under the circumstances, would rather have her than any of the others. So, wrapped in a large shawl, she sat on watching her uneasy slumbers, and thinking over all that she had heard; rejoicing that Miss Rivers need no longer blame herself sorrowing for poor Jane,

but still very thankful that she had had the courage to confess her fault. Life at a Swiss inn begins early, and is ushered in with extreme noise, and Helen did not wonder that Jane could sleep no longer when once the banging of doors and clatter of human tongues had begun. The little sleep she had obtained, however, had done her good; she was in less pain, and much less excited. At her request, Helen was induced to return to her room, and lie down for a little while before dressing. She was, however, too much excited to rest, and as soon as she thought her father would be awake, she dressed herself, and going to his room, told him all that had happened, feeling, as she did so, a weight of responsibility taken off her mind. It had been a trying night for one so young, and Mr. Lancaster was not sorry when, at the end of her story, the poor little girl's overwrought feelings found vent in a good fit of crying. He promised to see Jane, and would have put off their journey till the next day, had he not seen an evident disinclination on Helen's part to remain; so that, taking all things into consideration, it seemed best to adhere to their former plan.

Now that she had eased her mind by her confession to Helen, Jane was more at rest, and when the doctor came he saw nothing in her state to cause alarm, and comforted her considerably by repeating over and over again in his broken English, 'Mees not fear. Mees arm soon be well.' Mr. Lancaster visited her before he left, and she gave him a full account of the matter. It appeared that her toothache had returned worse than ever, when she entered little Arthur's room for the night. She was distracted by the pain, and also half stupefied with the quantity of opiates she had applied externally and internally, in her efforts to obtain relief. Knowing how much in want of rest Miss Rivers herself was, she unfortunately, although with a good motive, determined to conceal her sufferings.

When about to give the medicine to the child, she fancied, from the shape and size of the bottle, and from the contents being untouched, that it was her mistress's cough mixture which she herself had brought from the chemist. Seeing another bottle on the mantelshelf from which a little had been taken, she concluded that that was the right one. Jane said she did glance at the

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labels; but the pain she was in, her confused head, and the imperfect light in the room, misled her, and caused the fatal mistake. All she could say in extenuation of her fault was, that she never would have thought of concealment had not Miss Rivers at once supposed the mistake to have been caused by her own carelessness. Then Jane said the temptation was too great to be resisted, she yielded to it, and afterwards, although the reproaches of her conscience were dreadful to bear, she could not find courage to tell the truth, and every day made it more and more difficult to do so. She thought that when Miss Rivers left England she should have felt more at peace, but it was not so; and at length she left Mrs. Arden's service on the plea of ill health: no false excuse this; for her conscience had given her no rest by day or by night, and she was worn to a shadow. Her mistress thinking a complete change would be good for her, recommended her as a travelling maid to her young cousins, Julia and Diana Arden; and Jane, welcoming the idea of new scenes and new companions, was very thankful to be engaged by them. For a while the novelty of travelling and Julia's whims diverted her

mind from her misery, but Helen's mention of Miss Rivers at Chamounix brought it all back again, and made her more wretched than ever. Then came her accident, and the fear of dying made her resolve to tell Helen the truth—a resolution which she would have carried into effect next morning had not Helen come into her room that night. Mr. Lancaster told her that of course the whole story must be made known to Mr. Arden, to Miss Rivers, and to her former master; but he thought it advisable that no one else should be told. Her father knew that Helen might be implicitly trusted, and that when once she had written to Miss Rivers, and received her answer, she would never renew the subject. When Mr. Lancaster had finished telling Mr. Arden the story, he said, 'And now, it remains with you to decide whether you will keep Jane on in your service. She has erred greatly, it is true; but I really believe her to be repentant now.'

'I will talk to her about it when she has recovered a little,' replied Mr. Arden. 'I think, however, that I shall keep her. She has suffered severely for her fault, and will not, I should

think, ever lose the remembrance of it, or of her fatal carelessness. Besides, I could not conscientiously recommend her to any one else, knowing what I do, without telling the whole story; and I doubt if any one would take her under these circumstances.'

'I think you will act both wisely and kindly, in giving her another trial,' replied Mr. Lancaster. 'Helen begged me to ask you to do so.'

'Poor little thing!' said Mr. Arden, 'I hope she is not upset by this business?'

'Well, she is rather, I fear. It was unfortunate that it should all have happened in the night, as she lost her rest, besides being very much excited. However, it will all have a good effect upon her in the end, no doubt. I am sure she will never give any medicine carelessly, and she will have seen the misery and guilt occasioned by concealing the truth.'

'I don't think she needs the latter lesson,' said Mr. Arden. 'I think I never saw so open and truthful a countenance, excepting, perhaps, my Diana's. She never can keep anything to herself for two minutes together, not even when it is necessary to do so.'



‘Helen can keep a secret very well,’ said her father. ‘For instance, it appears that Miss Rivers told her at Basle about this poor little boy’s death, blaming herself as the cause. This, Helen never told me until this morning, not because she was forbidden to speak of it, but because she felt it had been told her in confidence, and that Miss Rivers naturally would not like it talked about.’





## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE JOURNEY TO THUN.

**I**N the middle of the day the Lancasters and Julia started for Martigny, at which place they were to spend the night. For some time they followed a steep path on the side of the mountain, which, covered with dark forests, gives the name of Tête Noire, or 'Black Head,' to the pass. Looking back, beautiful peeps of the valleys and snowy mountains could be caught, while below them the torrent of the Trient was heard rushing along, making a deafening noise. The scene altogether was one of great beauty, but it was thrown away on Helen that day; her head ached, and her thoughts were full of poor Jane and Miss Rivers. She had not yet written to the latter, and she felt that until this had been done her mind would not

be at rest. Mr. Lancaster, seeing she would like to be quiet, said very little to her; he and Julia talked together as well as the noise and narrow path would permit, and Helen rode on in front, deep in thought.

‘Now for some tea and bed, Helen,’ said her father, as he lifted her off the mule at the door of the hotel at Martigny. ‘I am sure you are dreadfully tired.’

‘I am rather, dear papa; but you will let me write to Miss Rivers to-night?’

‘Take my advice, and put it off till to-morrow,’ replied Mr. Lancaster. ‘You are only fit for bed now.’

‘Very well,’ said Helen, rather unwillingly; but she yielded to her father’s wishes, and was soon comfortably settled in bed, and before long fast asleep, dreaming of her Scottish home.

Next morning the letter was written, and sent to Miss Rivers, accompanied by a few lines from Mr. Lancaster. This done, the carriage came round to the door, and they set off in it for the Baths of Leuk. The drive through the valley of the Rhone was pleasant, and the country pretty, although rather tame until the village of Leuk

was reached. Then the character of the scenery changed, and for the next seven or eight miles they drove through a beautiful gorge, up a very hilly road cut along the side of the mountain. However, it was rather a tedious ending to a long journey, as the horses seldom went beyond a foot's pace, and none of the party were sorry when the cliffs and white hotels of Leukerbad appeared in view. There was little time for lionising that evening, so the following day was devoted to the sights of the place. First and foremost of these must be placed the Great Bath, in which people of both sexes can be seen from morning to night, bobbing up and down to their chins in the warm water, like so many potatoes steaming in a pot! They all wear long woollen dresses, and are provided with floating wooden tables on which to place their books, work, snuff-boxes, tea-cups, chess, cards, or what they please. Underneath the water are benches for those who wish to sit down. Helen and Julia were much amused at this novel sight, for these good people submit to be made one of the lions of the town, and strangers are invariably taken to see '*le grand bain*,' the first thing on

arriving. It is really very droll to see all the different heads emerging from the water, each face wearing a different expression ; and one is apt to forget that they are human beings, and to consider them in the light of puppets placed there on purpose to give amusement. At least, so Helen seemed to think, for she laughed so long and heartily at the funny exhibition, that Julia, much shocked, was compelled to call her to order ; and Mr. Lancaster, feeling very much inclined to follow Helen's example, to suggest that they should leave the baths for the present. The next thing to be seen was the 'ladders.' The nearest village to Leukerbad is Albinen, situated at the top of a high cliff. There is no direct road to it, and the only way by which the inhabitants of the two villages can communicate is by ascending and descending the precipitous face of the cliff, by the aid of several short ladders which are fastened by hooked iron sticks into the crevices of the rocks. Many of these ladders are broken, and very rickety ; yet at all seasons and at all hours, men, women, and children, encumbered with heavy burdens, clamber up and down them. The danger would not seem so great

were they placed close to each other, but one or two are some distance off from the others, and there is a large space of rock between them. The Lancasters were fortunate enough to see a little girl descending from Albinen. She could not have been more than eight years of age, and carried a large bundle, but not one false step did she make for all that; as sure-footed as a little goat, she scrambled on, arriving at the bottom safe and sound. Helen stopped her as she was running off to Leukerbad, and asked if she wasn't afraid to venture up and down by herself. The little thing laughed at the idea of fear in connexion with the ladders, and told Helen that she should not return until quite late in the evening, when the bundle she was carrying would have increased to twice its size. At dinner Helen and Julia recognised a great many faces they had seen in the bath, and the former was greatly disconcerted when a gentleman seated next to her said quietly, 'I saw you, mademoiselle, at the bath to-day. How very much amused you were with us all! Did we look such great frights then?'

'I am afraid I must have appeared very rude,'

replied Helen, in the best French she could muster up, blushing very much at her laughter having been observed, and not quite certain whether the old Frenchman appreciated the amusement he had occasioned.

After dinner Mr. Lancaster engaged horses for the morrow, to take them over the Gemmi Pass, part of which lies among the steep mountains which surround Leukerbad. Until you are close to the cliffs, it is almost impossible to believe that there is any path at all, but by degrees a dark zig-zag line is seen wending up among the rocks, a narrow and dangerous path enough ; but with common care mules and horses pass along it in perfect safety. The road has been most ingeniously made, quarried out of the solid rock, and projects in terraces overhanging each other, so that it is only now and then that you can see the path any distance before you. Julia rode to the commencement of the pass, and then, taking fright at the dangerous-looking ascent, insisted on dismounting and walking. After some time, Mr. Lancaster prevailed on her to ride again for a short while ; for, knowing how unaccustomed she was to walking, he feared she would be quite

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knocked up. But at every turn of the road she shrieked and screamed in such a foolish manner, that he was compelled to let her get off the horse. The others rode, even Marjorie, who was a brave little Scotch lassie, afraid of nothing. It must be confessed that Helen felt a little nervous at one very narrow part of the path, when her mule had to stand close to the edge of the precipice, to allow some other mules who were coming down the pass to go by ; but she kept her fears to herself, only entreating the guide to keep firm hold of the rein, which he did, and the long train of animals went by in safety. The top of the pass was at length reached, and the beautiful view of the Alps, rising up into a series of pyramidal peaks, one above the other, beyond the valley of the Rhone, was seen to perfection, and fully enjoyed. By all, that is to say, but Julia, who at this period declared herself completely knocked up by her fatiguing walk ; fretful, complaining, and half crying, she was again placed on the horse and taken to the little inn, from which they were not then very far. Here they were delayed by her for some time, for she really was very tired ; and a fit of hysterics, in which she had indulged, had



made her head ache, and increased her fatigue. This was the first trouble they had had with her since leaving the Tête Noire. Up to the present time everything had been rose-coloured, and Helen and she had got on extremely well together. Now, owing to the fatigue and fright, everything was wrong with her, and no one could be more troublesome and disagreeable than she was. At one time Mr. Lancaster almost despaired of continuing the journey that day; but at length, by dint of great good-humour and tact on his and Helen's part, Julia was brought into a more sensible frame of mind, and consented to proceed as far as Kandersteg, a small village picturesquely situated at the other side of the Gemmi Pass. Here they passed the night in a charming little inn, built in the style of a Swiss cottage. To her great delight, Julia heard that the remainder of the journey to Thun would be performed in a carriage, along a level road. This piece of intelligence completely restored her good temper for the time being, greatly to the comfort of the others.

Next morning, before starting for Thun, the innkeeper told them that there was a very pretty

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waterfall close at hand worth visiting. So having some time to spare, and all being willing, they set off to see it. A little flaxen-haired daughter of the landlord's was desired by her father to show the way, and, accompanied by a large Newfoundland dog, she ran on in front, every now and then turning round with a shy smile to see if they were following. After a short, hot, dusty walk along the road, they turned into a meadow, where, to her delight, Helen found a quantity of bright blue gentians growing. She was soon eagerly gathering them, in spite of Julia's astonishment that she could care to stop and pick flowers in such a hot sun. Little Marie, the guide, probably thought the small gentians not worth gathering, for running off to a little distance, she returned with a bunch of flaming yellow dandelions, which, with a look of shy pleasure, she offered to Julia. Miss Arden, however, refused them, telling her in German to throw the ugly flowers away; but Helen, noticing the poor little girl's crestfallen face, held out her hand for the flowers, and, with a smile, asked if she might have them.

'Quite right, Helen,' said her father; 'I am

glad you didn't let her throw them away; the poor little girl's feelings would have been hurt, for she meant to give pleasure.'

Julia coloured, and said she thought it very unlikely that a child like that should have such acute feelings.

'I don't agree with you,' said Mr. Lancaster; 'but whether or no, it is as well to err on the right side;' and to this Julia made no reply.

A little roughish scrambling brought them to the top of the hill from which the waterfall was seen. Sitting on the grass opposite it, they watched it come tumbling down from its rocky bed into the torrent beneath, enjoying the cool spray with which every now and then their faces were sprinkled. Meanwhile, little Marie and the dog were having great romps together, and innumerable stones and sticks were thrown down the hill, as far as her little arms would permit, for him to fetch. But sometimes Blas, that was his name, wouldn't give up the stone or stick, and then the two had a regular struggle together—Marie shouting and screaming with glee, her little hands tugging at his mouth, and Blas rolling on the grass growling in play. She was

generally victorious, and then she would punish him by sitting on his plaything, and pretending she didn't mean to throw it down the hill again ; upon which Blas, without any ceremony, would do his best to overturn his small mistress, and get it away by force, never however losing his good temper for a moment. Helen was watching the two, laughing heartily at their antics, when suddenly her mirth was checked, for little Marie, in throwing the stone down the hill, lost her balance, and, unable to recover herself, fell over the edge and rolled over and over nearly to the bottom, where fortunately a large piece of projecting rock saved her from falling into the torrent.

'Don't attempt to follow me, children,' said Mr. Lancaster, who also saw the accident, and, jumping up, immediately began scrambling down the least steep side of the declivity, to the spot where the child lay. Julia commenced screaming out for help, but Helen, though trembling with fear both for her father and for the child, did not utter a sound. She longed to follow him, and with difficulty restrained herself from doing so. To one of Mr. Lancaster's age the descent was no easy one, and his weak ankle rendered it

still more difficult. Helen's eyes never wandered from him as he slowly made his way down. Every moment she feared that his foot would slip; but at length, with a deep-drawn sigh of thankfulness, she saw him arrive in safety. And then, for the first time, she noticed that Blas was lying by the side of his little mistress, protecting her, as it were, until better help could come. He began to whine and cry as Mr. Lancaster took the little girl in his arms, and followed him slowly up the hill with his head hanging down, looking the picture of misery. You can fancy that if the descent was difficult, the ascent, with a child to carry, was still more so.

'Oh, he will never be able to get up!' thought Helen, in an agony, as she watched her father's slow and almost imperceptible progress.

'Shall I run for help?' said Julia, whose screams Helen had soon stopped. 'There is no one in sight, but I think I could find my way back to the inn.'

'Yes, do,' answered the other. 'Why didn't we think of it before! Make haste.'

The noise of the waterfall was too great for Mr. Lancaster to make Helen hear, if he had

called out, although the distance between them was not very great. She saw him look up once and wave his hand to her as though to reassure her, but she also saw that he found it more and more difficult to climb up the precipitous hill again, encumbered as he was.

As far as she could make out, the child appeared hurt by her fall, and quite unable to help herself; but, to her inexpressible relief, Helen saw her lift her head once or twice, which showed she was alive. Very, very slowly Mr. Lancaster was climbing up, when Helen heard voices behind her, and turning round saw that Julia was close at hand with two men, one being the innkeeper and father of little Marie. The poor man was evidently much frightened about his little daughter, and hurried down the hill to where she and Mr. Lancaster were. It was not long, then, before all, including old Blas, were safely at the top again. Happily little Marie was only very much bruised and shaken. It had, however, been a narrow escape, for only the large stone had saved her from falling into the stream.

‘You had better carry her home at once, and put her to bed,’ said Mr. Lancaster to the father,

who was alternately fondling his little girl and pouring out grateful thanks to him for his timely help; while Marie, frightened and in tears, was calling out piteously to be taken to her mother. Poor Blas looked very crestfallen as he followed them home, and seemed to think that he had been the cause of the accident.

‘Oh, papa, have you hurt yourself?’ asked Helen anxiously, as he seated himself on the grass as if in pain.

‘My ankle is a little painful, darling; but if I rest here for a few moments, I daresay it will be all right. It was hard work for an old fellow like me getting up that hill, without the use of my hands to help me on. Thank God, the poor little girl was not more hurt! I was terribly frightened when I first took her up, she was so pale and still; however, she was only stunned for the moment. Well, we must be going back,’ he continued, after a few minutes, looking at his watch, ‘the carriage must be at the door already. Help me up, Helen. Ah! I wish I had brought my stick, it would have helped me home nicely.’

‘Let me fetch it for you, I won’t be long,’ cried Helen; and off she darted quick as lightning,

returning in an incredibly short time with the stick, by the aid of which Mr. Lancaster was enabled to walk back to the inn, where the carriage was already waiting for them. On inquiring for little Marie, they heard that she had gone to bed ; for, although she had sustained no actual injury, yet her fall had made her feel ill for the time, and it was as well to keep her quiet.

Blas was lying outside the door with a very rueful countenance at being separated from his little mistress. And when Helen patted his head, and wished him good-bye, he only gave her a very feeble wag of his tail in reply, and allowed the carriage to drive off without even a solitary bark, so downhearted was the poor old dog.







## CHAPTER XV.

### OLD FRIENDS AGAIN.



N arriving at Thun, our travellers found several letters waiting for them at the hotel. Among them was one for Helen from Miss Rivers. She wrote thus :—

‘ MY DEAREST HELEN,—May God bless you for having been the means of relieving my heart from the dreadful weight of misery and self-reproach which pressed upon it ! I cannot write much to-day, for, as you can well imagine, your unexpected news has agitated me not a little. But, in the midst of my own selfish joy, I feel most keenly for poor Jane. Her mental sufferings all these months must have been fearful, for not only had she (judging by my own feelings) the misery of self-reproach to endure, but the

heavy weight of deceit as well. Let me know, dear Helen, when you hear of her again. I should be glad to know that she is recovering from her accident, and also that she is not going to lose her situation. When she is quite recovered, and I know her direction, I will write to her myself, as you seem to think it would be a comfort to her to know that I forgive her. Indeed I do.'

There was little else contained in the letter; evidently Miss Rivers' heart was too full for words, and Helen could not wonder at it.

Julia received a letter from her sister, speaking favourably of Jane, who, the doctor said, might travel on the morrow (the day after she wrote), and they therefore expected to reach Vevay in three days' time, and hoped Julia would not delay in joining them there; for, wrote Diana—

'We are more anxious than ever now to get home, and papa has determined to do so, notwithstanding painters and paperers. You can imagine that it has not been over lively in this little dull hole of an inn; but happily the weather has been fine, and we have amused ourselves as best we could out of doors. Our sole excitement

has been in the arrival and departure of the different parties of people from Chamounix and Martigny ; but they have been chiefly of the humdrum order, and so were not of much use to us. Now and then they have done or said something supremely ridiculous, and made donkeys of themselves, for which we were infinitely obliged ; but, alas ! these instances have been few and far between, and dear old daddy and I have had very little to laugh at.

‘ Jane is getting on wonderfully, and has really borne the pain very patiently. Tell Helen she considers her little short of an angel, because, I suppose, she sat up with her the other night—a proceeding, however, which I considered very unangelic, tell her, as she had no business to bear all the fatigue and to let me sleep on in peace. I haven’t forgiven her for it yet. I hope the poor little thing was not dreadfully knocked up at the end of the journey next day. We shall be glad to hear how you have been enjoying yourself. Papa’s love and mine.—Ever your affectionate sister,  
DIANA ARDEN.’

When the girls had finished reading their letters, Mr. Lancaster told Helen that he feared

one of his would be the means of disappointing her of a great deal of pleasure.

‘Why, papa; is anything the matter?’ she asked.

‘Not exactly, dear; but I find that my presence is necessary in London on some matters of money business, which I thought could have been postponed for two months or so, but which I now find must be attended to sooner. So we must, I fear, give up returning by Munich and Dresden.’

‘Well, anyhow, we shall have had a delightful trip,’ said Helen, trying to speak cheerfully, but feeling very much disappointed nevertheless.

‘When shall we have to start, papa?’

‘Oh, we have yet another fortnight before we need turn our heads homewards.’

‘Another fortnight! I am so glad! I was afraid we should have to set off to-morrow. Then we shall still see Interlachen, the Staubbach, and Lauterbrunnen?’

‘Yes,’ replied her father, ‘and Zurich also. And as we shall now return through France instead of Germany, you will see Paris, Helen, which will compensate for some of your losses.’

‘Indeed it will. What I most regret are the pictures at Munich and Dresden; but it can’t be helped.’

‘I daresay we shall come abroad some of these days again,’ said Mr. Lancaster, walking up to the window and looking out; ‘and then’—‘Why, Helen!’ he exclaimed, suddenly interrupting himself, ‘look out there in the garden, surely that child with all those furbelows on her dress is Bella Lee!’

‘Bella Lee!’ cried Helen, running to the window. ‘Yes, it must be, I declare! I suppose that tall boy is her brother.’

‘No doubt. It would be about the time for his holidays. Let us go down and surprise them.’

It was Bella beyond doubt; Helen might mistrust her eyes, but her ears could never be mistaken in that little querulous voice which, long before they reached her, could be heard begging her brother not to tease, and to give her back a box of sugarplums he had taken from her in fun.

‘Gerald, don’t be so ill-natured; give it me back. You’ve no business to tease me so. I’ll tell mamma if you go on so.’

‘Poor little thing! It shall wear long clothes, and a bib, and little woollen-knitted socks, and be treated like a baby, and play with its little toys, and suck its little lollipops, it shall; and nobody shan’t tease it, no, or take away its pretty things; no, they shan’t;’ and all the time he was tantalizing Bella by holding the box up very high above her head, pretending every now and then to eat some of the largest bon-bons.

‘Don’t, Gerald, I wish you had never come. You are very un—unkind. I wish I hadn’t a brother, I do;’ and Bella’s ready tears burst forth.

‘Now, Bella,’ said her brother, tossing the box to her, and dropping his bantering tone, speaking very gravely, ‘I’ll just tell you my opinion, you’re the veriest baby in the world; the most spoilt, disagreeable, peevish, provoking—’

‘Gently,’ said a voice behind him, ‘this is scarcely the soft answer that turneth away wrath.’

Gerald turned round angrily, while Bella, her tears suddenly arrested, recognised Mr. Lancaster with a cry of joy, and the next moment had thrown her arms round Helen’s neck in a tumult of surprise and delight. Then Mr. Lancaster introduced himself to Gerald, and as they walked

on together, said, smiling, 'I ought to apologize for preaching to you before I knew you, but—'

'Oh!' interrupted the boy, with a shy laugh, 'you were quite right. I was rather pitching into Bella; but it does rile me so when she goes off into fits of crying for nothing.'

'I would try and not provoke her,' said Mr. Lancaster. 'Poor child, she is more to be pitied than blamed!'

'Yes, I know, but I can't help teasing sometimes. I think she's all right now, however,' looking back at his sister, who, hand in hand with Helen, was following them, laughing and talking away most merrily.

'Yes, she and Helen are old friends. You know we met your father and mother at Lucerne a month or so ago. They then talked of going to Geneva, so that it is an unexpected pleasure meeting them here.'

'Yes, they were still thinking of Geneva when I joined them at Lucerne; but I thought it would be so slow there, not half as jolly as Interlachen, where some of the fellows at my dame's are, that I persuaded them to go there instead, and we are only here *en route*.'

‘We are also on our way to Interlachen, but only for a flying visit, I regret to say, as I am unexpectedly compelled to return to England very shortly.’ At this moment Mr. Lee joined them, very pleased but not surprised to see the Lancasters, as he had already heard of their arrival at the hotel. Finding the elders inclined to discuss drier subjects than he cared for, Gerald left them, and joined the children, as he called them—an epithet which Helen would have indignantly resented on her own account had she heard it. He found them seated on a bench under a shady tree, Helen showing Bella her pretty new watch, and telling her about the Ardens, and of everything they had seen and done since leaving Lucerne. Gerald having promised ‘not to tease,’ was also allowed to listen, which he did for some time, until tired of lying on the grass; and finding Helen had nothing more to say, ‘Bella having squeezed everything out of her,’ as he said, he began to find it somewhat ‘slow,’ and walked off in search of fresh amusement.

A day or two passed away pleasantly at Thun. There is nothing to see in the town, but the



shores of the lake are very pretty, and even grand in some parts where the giants of the Bernese Alps can be seen. When Julia Arden set off for Vevay, Mr. Lancaster and Helen accompanied the Lees to Interlachen. Helen thought the dazzling, glittering Jungfrau, that queen of Swiss mountains, more beautiful than anything she had yet seen in Switzerland. To poor Mrs. Lee, however, it was a source of perpetual worry, for Gerald had announced his determination to ascend it with two other Eton fellows. Tears and entreaties were showered upon him by Mrs. Lee, but in vain; for the boy, although possessing many good qualities, was both wilful and headstrong, and, it must be confessed, slightly selfish, the effect of injudicious spoiling, and having obtained his father's consent, he paid not the slightest attention to his mother's fears and tears. At that time, very few had ever attempted to tread the smooth white surface of the mountain, so that Mrs. Lee was not perhaps unnaturally timid. No harm fortunately came of the expedition; the boys, accompanied by good guides, ascended and descended in safety, and were in high glee at the feat achieved, but the

fright gave poor Mrs. Lee a nervous attack for two or three days, during which time none of the party led the pleasantest of lives.

From Interlachen an expedition was made to the Lake of Brienz and the Giesbach Falls, which are very beautiful, being a succession of cascades leaping step by step down the mountain side, sparkling among the dark rocks and rich green vegetation.

It is possible to pass behind one of these cascades by means of a slight wooden gallery, and it is often done, as the effect of the landscape seen through the curtain of water is very curious ; but it is rather a work of danger, as the constant dripping on the wood makes it very rotten, and it is constantly in need of repair. Some years ago a poor English girl lost her life at this very spot : as she was passing across the gallery, the wood gave way, and she was precipitated to the bottom. Her father had just passed over in safety, and her mother was waiting on the other side to follow her. They could, however, give no assistance, and I am not sure if even her body was ever recovered. Remembering this sad story, Mr. Lancaster would not let Helen go

behind the fall, although Gerald tried hard to induce him to let her accompany him, scouting contemptuously, in schoolboy fashion, the idea of there being any danger. On his return, however, he was obliged to confess that it was a ticklish place for girls, and that he was just as pleased to have had no screamers to take care of.

‘As if I should have screamed!’ said Helen indignantly, when he made the remark.

‘Well, perhaps you might not have done so, but I’m sure Bella would have kicked up a fearful row; and as for that Miss Arden, I should never have got her over the place at all.’

The Lancasters left the white houses and walnut trees of Interlachen a day or two after this expedition. Their ultimate destination was to be Zurich, but several days would elapse before it could be reached, as they intended travelling by the longest and prettiest route. The first night was to be passed at Grindelwald, a valley shut in by the huge mountains of the Bernese oberland, and chiefly remarkable for its glaciers. The way thence over the Wengern Alp is very lovely. Helen and her father started at five o’clock in the morning, in order to get some part

of the journey over before the extreme heat of the day set in. It was a bright beautiful morning, and the drive to Lauterbrunnen, in the cool fresh air, was most delightful. There had been heavy rain over night, and brilliant dewdrops sparkled on the green flowery meadows, and upon the dark ivy which hung in rich festoons on the overhanging cliffs, above which the ruined castle of Unspunnen rose picturesquely, while the gloriously white Jungfrau was before their eyes the whole way. At Lauterbrunnen other mountains came into sight,—the ‘cloud-hooded’ Monk, the Silverhorn, the Wetterhorn, or Peak of Tempests, and the Eigher or Giant.

‘Longfellow calls mountains in one of his books, “those sublime apostles of Nature whose sermons are avalanches.” I like the idea.’

‘And so do I,’ said Helen. ‘I hope we shall see some avalanches on the Wengern Alp, although I suppose they will only be little ones.’

‘It is to be hoped so for our sakes,’ said her father. ‘Do you know what the word Lauterbrunnen means, Helen?’

‘I suppose it has something to do with water or wells.’

‘ Literally, it means “ nothing but fountains ;” the name is derived, doubtless, from all these streamlets which fall over the cliffs into the valley. While the saddles are being put on the horses, we can walk and see the grand waterfall, the Staubbach.’

This fall is one of the highest in Europe. Its name, literally translated, means *dust stream*, and was given to it because, from the great height it falls, and from being formed by a small body of water, it is cut by the wind into spray resembling dust, before reaching the bottom. Lord Byron compared it to the tail of a white horse streaming in the wind ; and Wordsworth spoke of it as ‘ this bold, bright, skyborn waterfall.’

The sun was full upon it when Helen and her father reached the spot, and its rays formed a beautiful iris, shining with all the colours of the rainbow.

After admiring it for some time, they walked back to the inn, mounted the horses, and began the ascent of the Wengern Alp. This expedition is not at all difficult, and is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland. Every step seems to bring you nearer and nearer to the Jungfrau, which

lies before you the whole way, and appears as if overhanging the path, its enormous size causing the effect of distance to be lost. Half way over, there was a small inn, where the horses were rested for some time. This was also the best point for seeing the avalanches fall; and after some luncheon, consisting chiefly of chamois, and delicious wild Alpine strawberries and cream, Helen and Mr. Lancaster walked to the brow of a ravine which directly faced the mountain, and, sitting down on the grass, waited in the hope of hearing or seeing some descend. Their patience was not long tried, soon a distant noise like thunder was heard, and directly after, some loose snow fell from a gully in the mountain, and, rapidly increasing in quantity, rushed like lightning down the side, from one point to another; then came another roar, and this time masses of ice fell and were broken to atoms before being precipitated into the gulf beneath.

‘We are very fortunate to see such a good one, Helen,’ said Mr. Lancaster. ‘We might have waited for hours before doing so.’

‘Was that really a large avalanche then? It didn’t look so.’

‘ Ah ! if you had been nearer you would have altered your opinion. Do you remember those lines of Longfellow’s ?—

“ All in a moment, crash on crash,  
From precipice to precipice,  
An avalanche’s ruins dash  
Down to the nethermost abyss,  
Invisible ; the ear alone  
Pursues the uproar till it dies,  
Echo to echo, groan for groan,  
From deep to deep replies.”

Of the devastating nature of avalanches, Helen had a good specimen, as they descended to Grindelwald—the road passing through a forest where the trees had literally been mown down by them. The white, barkless trunks, broken off close to the ground, alone remained, presenting a most curious appearance. As they walked down the steep descent towards the valley, they passed close to a small flock of goats feeding on the mountain pasture, and to Helen’s great astonishment, instead of appearing frightened and running away, they began to follow them ; and, in spite of Mr. Lancaster’s endeavours to drive them away, insisted on keeping close company with their new friends. One old fellow, bolder than the rest, actually

tried to poke his nose into Mr. Lancaster's very wide pockets.

'What can he want?' laughed Helen. 'He must smell something very nice. Perhaps it's your tobacco pouch, papa.'

'We'll see;' and, taking it out of his pocket Mr. Lancaster opened it, and held it out to the goat, who eagerly helped himself to a large mouthful. 'Helen, that's more than I bargained for,' he said, laughing.

'How curious!' said Helen. 'Did you know goats were so fond of tobacco, papa?'

'No, indeed, I did not, or I shouldn't have offered my best Latakia so recklessly to this cunning fellow. It must be very bad for them, I should think. I have often heard and read of their fondness for salt, a taste which their wild cousins, the chamois, also possess. There are certain places on the Alps which they frequent in great numbers, because the rocks there are salt to the taste. They have a longing to lick these rocks, and will often travel great distances in order to do so; but how they can have cultivated a taste for tobacco is more than I can tell.'





## CHAPTER XVI.

### LAST DAYS.

**T**HE approach to Grindelwald was as beautiful as green pastures, chalets, and fir-trees, magnificent mountains and glaciers, could make it. The greater part of the year, however, this pretty valley cannot be visited by strangers, being shut in by snow for seven or eight months. On account of its great height above the sea (3350 feet), the summer heat is never felt very much, and the crops and fruit are all very late. From the windows of the hotel Helen had a beautiful view of the glaciers and their icebergs, split into innumerable towers, crags, and pinnacles, and after a short rest she walked out with her father to get a nearer view of them. At the bottom of the lower glacier there is a magnificent dark blue arch of ice, out of

which rushes a torrent formed by the dripping of the ice as it melts.

Early on the following morning the travellers were again on horseback, for, their time being now limited, only a few hours could be given to each place. Their route this day was to lead over the Scheideck Pass, through the lovely vale of Rosenlauri, past the Falls of Reichenbach to Meyringen. As they rode up the first part of the ascent, the peaks of the Wetterhorn were straight before them, rising up into the blue sky, some shrouded, some clear. In front of one of the slopes of the mountain was stationed a peasant with an Alpine horn, formed from a piece of hollow pine-wood, through which he sounded a few simple notes, which, after a moment or so, were caught up and repeated by the echoes of the cliff, returning softer and sweeter to the ear, but being still wonderfully distinct and clear.

At Rosenlauri they dismounted to see another glacier celebrated for the purity of its ice. Although not split into such grand forms as those of Grindelwald, Helen thought this new glacier much more beautiful; there was no disfiguring moraine at each side, and the clear azure tint of

the iceberg, and deep sapphire of the cavern, was most lovely.

Then came the Reichenbach, with its 'white sheet of foam,' and finally the village of Meyringen 'embowered in cherry trees.' The journey thence next day to Stanzstad, on the lake of Lucerne, was performed in a carriage over the Brunig Pass. As they passed through the town of Stanz, Mr. Lancaster stopped for a few moments to show Helen the statue of Arnold von Winkelried, which stands in the market-place, representing him with the sheaf of spears in his arms. Stanz was his birthplace. In a field called the 'Meadow of Winkelried's Children' is shown a house supposed to have been his.

'There is another Stanz hero famous in Swiss history,' said Mr. Lancaster, 'viz., Nicholas von der Flue, who, after having been a soldier for many years, and having distinguished himself by many brave deeds, suddenly turned hermit, and resolved to devote the rest of his days to God in perfect retirement from the world, in the wilds near his native place.'

'And did he remain there till his death?'

'Yes; but on one occasion he left his hermi-



THE ICE CAVE OF THE GRINDELWALD GLACIER.—PAGE 218.



tage for a short time to settle some dissensions among his countrymen. They were averse to receiving the towns of Soleure and Friburg into the confederacy, and a great deal of ill feeling was caused, and would have occasioned much bloodshed, had not the Pastor of Stanz visited Nicholas in his retirement and implored his aid. On hearing the state of affairs, he immediately left his cell, and, hastening to Stanz, appeared in the Rathhaus among the excited people. He was held in the greatest respect, and, at his totally unexpected appearance, complete silence fell on all assembled. Taking advantage of it, he exhorted them, in the name of God, who had so often caused their arms to be victorious, to bury their present resentments and petty jealousies, to admit Friburg and Soleure into the confederacy, and to be again united. His wise counsels gained the day; and having substituted harmony for dissension, he returned to his solitary rock and rigid life. If we come into the Rathhaus or Town-hall we shall see a picture of him taking leave of his wife and family before entering into his retirement.'

The following morning, Mr. Lancaster and

Helen started for Zürich, and taking the steamer to Brunnen, a town opposite Stanzstad, they there engaged a carriage to take them to their destination. Their first halting place was Schwytz, where they remained an hour or so to see the town, which, although a small place, possesses many interesting associations. The people of this canton were the first to be called Swiss or Schwytzer. The name was first given to them after the famous battle of Morgarten, in which they distinguished themselves so greatly in the fourteenth century. The plain of Morgarten has been twice celebrated as a battle-field ; first, on the occasion already mentioned, and second, at the close of the last century, when a conflict took place between the Swiss and the French, in which the former again had the advantage.

In a well-known work on Switzerland (by Beattie), there is mention made of a tradition among the people of Schwytz, to the effect that they are descended from the ancient Scandinavians. They say that in the very early ages there was a great famine in the north, and it was determined that every tenth man and his family should leave the country and settle elsewhere.

In this way six thousand emigrated from the North, and relying upon God's mercy to lead them to a land where they might live free and quiet, with food for their families and cattle, they wandered about until they came to a valley among the Alps, where, having cleared away several forests, they built the town of Schwytz, and peopled and cultivated the neighbouring cantons.

As Helen and her father drove along, they passed a great number of people, men and women, wending their way along the road. They were nearly all belonging to the lower orders, but all were dressed in the cleanest and neatest manner imaginable. Most of the women were bare-headed, but the men were not, at which Helen was much surprised. They all looked serious and pre-occupied, and many of them were repeating prayers or psalms to themselves. All were in the costumes of the district, and the different dresses made the scene a very picturesque one. Helen was much amused with some of the women's head-dresses, especially those made of very stiff net, which were placed on the top of the head, standing up like large fans.



‘I wonder where all these people are going,’ said Mr. Lancaster; and at the same moment the man who was driving them, turned round, and pointing to the people, said in German, that they were pilgrims on their way to the Abbey of Einsiedeln, to which place it was the custom to make pilgrimages on certain days in the year.

‘What for?’ asked Helen.

‘To worship at the sacred shrine of Our Lady,’ answered the coachman, reverently; ‘some to ask for health and other blessings; others to confess their sins, or to express their gratitude for deliverance from some great danger or temptation. Does not the Fräulein know the legend of the holy hermit Meinrad who founded the Abbey?’

‘No, the Fräulein did not, but would like to hear it very much;’ whereupon the coachman, after a few words of encouragement to his horses, slowly toiling up the long steep hill, seated himself sideways on the box, and began to relate how, in the time of Charlemagne, there had lived a good man, called Meinrad, of noble birth, who, despising the vanities of the world, retired into a remote

wilderness of Helvetia, and there, in a cell in the rock, devoted his days and nights to prayer, and to consoling those who came to him in sin and sorrow. The Abbess of Zürich had given him a little black image of the Virgin, and before this figure all his prayers were said. It is related that even the wild beasts of the forest were friends with him, and allowed him to feed and caress them. But especially was he beloved by two ravens, who were accustomed to frequent his cell daily, and to share his food. One day when the hermit was engaged in prayer before the Virgin's shrine, two wicked men rushed into his cell and barbarously murdered him for the sake of the silver lamp which hung over the figure. 'In this remote spot our crime will never be discovered,' they thought; but guilt is never safe. The two ravens arrived at the cell at the very moment that they were hurrying forth, and seeing their beloved master lying dead on the ground, they comprehended all, and with loud caws of vengeance flew after the robbers, beating the air with their strong wings, and tried to tear the men to pieces with their sharp beaks and talons. Vainly they endeavoured to escape; they screamed for

Queen Mary, the place was considered one of refuge for all Protestants afraid to live in England.

There is little or nothing to see in the town in the way of sights, but it abounds in manufacturing, literary and charitable institutions. The views seen from the lake are pretty, but rather tame, the country being highly cultivated. The Lancasters only remained one night, and then travelled by diligence to Basle, where they took the train to Paris. All that Helen saw there cannot be put down here.

One thing is certain, she thoroughly enjoyed herself. Neither is there space here to enlarge on the discomforts of the short but rough passage from Boulogne to Folkestone, or on the delights of Marjorie when foreign shores were fairly left behind, and she drew nearer to her beloved Scotland. One thing, however, must be mentioned, namely, a chance meeting between Helen and the Ardens in London, which led to her seeing Jane, who, now completely recovered from her accident and her mind at rest, was a very different person from the one Helen had last seen at the Tête Noire. From her she

learnt that Miss Rivers had written a most kind letter, full of forgiveness and good feeling, which Jane said had indeed been a blessing to her to receive ; also, that Mr. Arden had promised not to allow the past to interfere with her remaining in his service.

‘ And oh, Miss Helen ! ’ was her parting speech ; ‘ indeed I have been punished enough. I can never forget the misery which my carelessness and deceit have caused both to myself and others.’

As soon as Mr. Lancaster’s business was over in London, he and Helen started for their Highland home, which in due course of time was reached. Miss Selby had returned from Edinburgh, and was ready to welcome her little pupil ; and, to Helen’s great delight, neither Luah nor Gellert seemed to have forgotten her in the least. Helen had gained very much in the three months she had been abroad, and that not only in health, for all she had seen and heard, even the new faces and characters with which she had become acquainted, had helped to open her mind and to enlarge her ideas.

The pleasures she had enjoyed, however, did

not make her discontented with her own quiet home, to which she was both delighted and grateful to return.

‘ Sweet is the smile of home ; the mutual look  
When hearts are of each other sure ;  
Sweet all the joys that crowd the humble nook,  
The haunts of all affections pure.’

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